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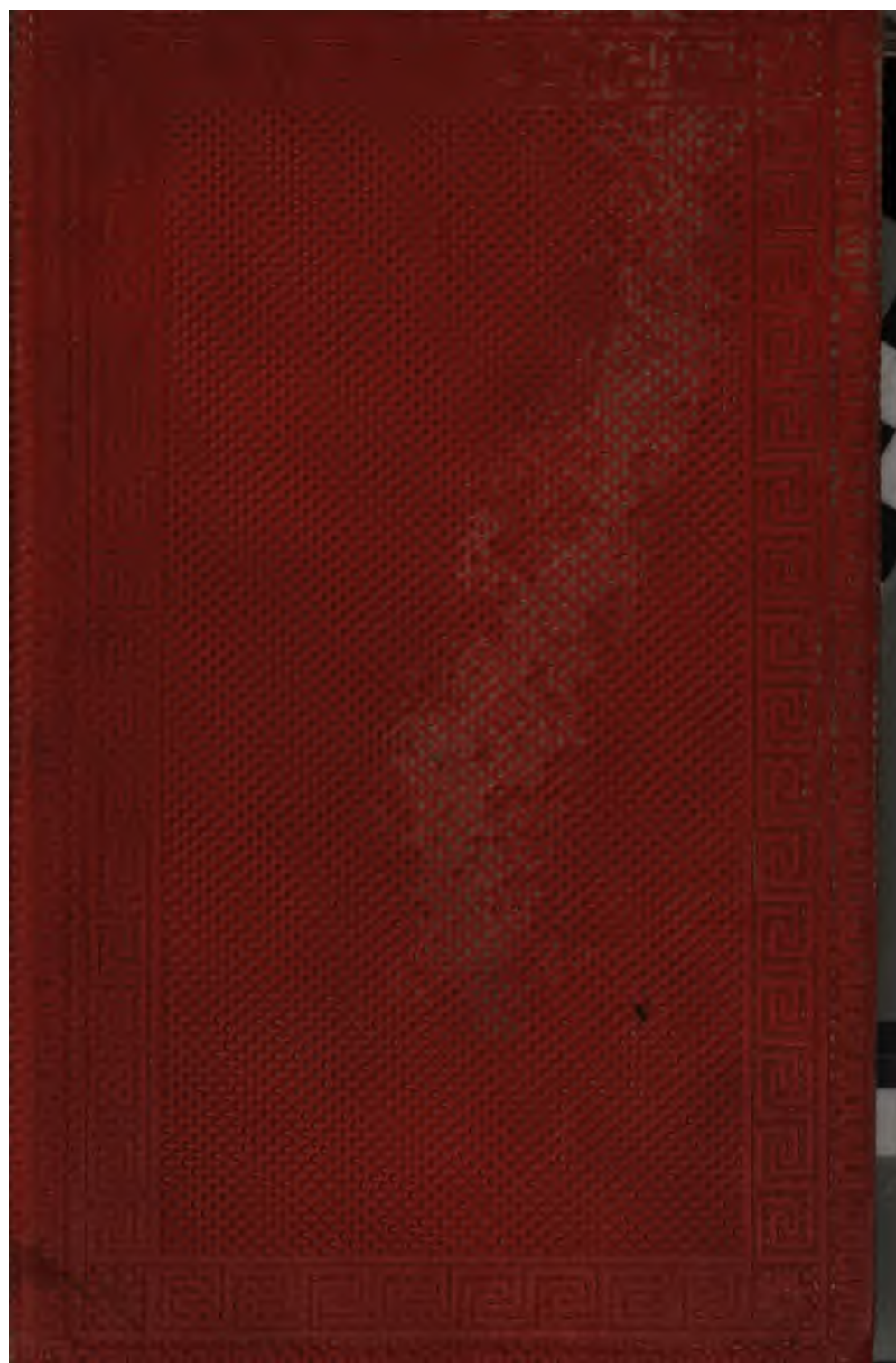
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The Queen's Royal  
Regt.







**OUR VETERANS OF 1854:**  
**IN CAMP, AND BEFORE THE ENEMY.**



# OUR VETERANS OF 1854:

In Camp, and before the Enemy.

BY

A REGIMENTAL OFFICER.

"We are but warriors for the working day:  
Our gayness and our gilt are all besmirch'd  
With rainy marching in the painful field.  
There's not a piece of feather in our host.  
(Good argument, I hope, we shall not fly)  
And time has worn us into slovenry:  
But by the mass, our hearts are in the trim."

K HENRY V.

LONDON:  
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1859.

*The Author reserves the right of Translation.*

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## NOTICE.

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IN this little book a Regimental Officer attempts to tell how Englishmen marched and fought, conquered and died, during the earlier acts of the Crimean campaign. He desires to record his admiration of the Rank and File, —“base, common, and popular”—who, though they bore the heat and burthen of the day, have received the smallest share of the honours and rewards of the war. He ventures, also, to express his respect for certain Generals, whose position in the army was scarcely in accordance with the extent of their military experience, and the excellence of their professional talents.

LONDON : November, 1858.



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## ERRATA.

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Page 45, line 24, for *these are*, read *there are*.

„ 52, „ 15, for *winnowings*, read *whinnyings*.

„ 55, „ 3, for *foris*, read *focis*.

„ 67, „ 2, for 40,000, read 12,000.

„ 98, „ 28, for *expedient*, read *advisable*.

„ 133, „ 5, for *short livid*, read *short lived*.

„ 183, „ 1, for *are invisible*, read *were invisible*.

„ 186, „ 6, for *white town*, read *white tower*

„ 193, „ 1, for *have been*, read *this remark to have been*.

„ 204, „ 14, for *topol*, read *Sevastopol*.

„ 220, „ 29, for *over four miles*, read *over three miles*.

„ 333, „ 9, for *a mature*, read *an amateur*.

# OUR VETERANS OF 1854.

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## ACT I.

"PRIME AND LOAD."

——Forth, dear my countrymen ; let us deliver  
Our puissance into the hand of God,  
Putting it straight in expedition.  
Cheerly to sea ; the signs of war advance.

K. HENRY V.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### MALTA.

Embarkation—Farewell—Lobsters on ship-board—The "Rock,"  
*en passant*—Soldiers' wives on service—Real maid-of-all-work in  
the field—Malta—Quarters—Valetta—Faldetta—Knights and  
their works—Palaces—The locks of Sampson—Art and Vandalism  
—Their glory is departed—Saints and sinners—Religious tolera-  
tion—Capuchin monastery—St. Antonio—Citta Vecchia—Maltese  
Fencibles—Language—Alas ! for the demonstration ! "Ring the  
alarm bell"—Notes of preparation—General Ferguson—Minié—  
"A glass" with new friends—Stepping to the front.

IN the beginning of 1854—twelve months after a Rus-  
sian ambassador had bearded the Grand Turk in his own  
capital, and six months after a Russian army had invaded  
the Principalities—three battalions of the Household  
Brigade were ordered out to Malta, just to "make a de-  
monstration ;" for the "ministry of all the talents"—

"Linguâ melior, sed frigida bello  
Dextera"——



imagined, that the bare fact of a few hundred British grenadiers rollicking about the streets of Valetta, would suffice to break in pieces the adamantine links of a national policy, to arrest the march of Gortchakoff's divisions, and to wring from a despot, as audacious as he was astute, "peccavi," and the olive branch.

The Guards quitted London, huzzaed by tens of thousands: Patrician Belgravia sorrowfully lisped its farewell; the city burgher shouted, as the Anglo-Saxon alone can shout; the "dangerous classes" of Bermondsey and the Borough whistled, yelled, and screeched bellicose enthusiasm. "Keep yer pecker up, my boys," was counsel unceasingly tendered by the roughs; "bring us back the big bear in a cage," was a solution of the Turkish difficulty exceedingly in favour with the practical have-at-em masses.

Four years have passed away, so has the mighty Czar, so have three-fourths of the flushed soldiery that then strode along the Strand: pride of England's aristocracy, flower of her sturdy peasantry.

At Southampton, another ovation cheered the "brigade," as it embarked on board the mail-steamers *Oronoco*, *Ripon*, and *Manilla*. The decks of those superb ships swarmed with excited friends; the adjacent quays were black with a generous multitude, lavish of vociferation, and untiring in the flourishing of hats, caps, and pocket-handkerchiefs. But time wears; decks must be cleared; and now did hearts, sometime hard as the nether millstone, soften into the melting mood, and moisture become palpable in eyes hitherto but slightly remarkable for the suavity of their regard. Well, relatives, acquaintances, and "duns," (that ubiquitous genus was stoutly represented on the occasion) consign us to the Gods—in how many cases for the last time,—and away we glide, the intoxicating acclamation of that once peace-loving city actually lashing a few pacific dispositions into a temporary notion of their

especial fitness for the honourable trade of chivalrous homicide.

*"Incenditque animum famæ venientis amore."*

FEB. 22.—We are well at sea, and have betaken ourselves to reflection, or resigned ourselves to the merciless malady. Reaction has set in; the hip, hip hurrahs, of magnanimous John Bull, float on the breeze no more; the sympathizing oscillations of feminine cambric have ceased long ago; and the poor land-lubber, sorely let and hindered by the angry swell not unusual outside the "Needles," has crawled into his berth, cries for brandy-fied soda water, d——s the dinner-bell, and never expects to relish porter and boiled mutton again.

Wretched was the lot of the rank and file just then. Most of the privates having set eyes on the great deep, for the first time, were at their wits' end. Muffled curses, and faint entreaties, guttural oaths, and sulky muttering, mingled with painful evidence that the ordinary bilious tribute to the Nemesis of the seas was in course of liquidation.

The chaos of baggage, and of recumbent, it may be repentant, warriors, seemed to defy the establishment of order, for while ailing was all but universal, while thick heads reeled, and brawny arms were paralyzed, how could packs be stowed ship-shape? how was Brown Bess to be securely lodged? in what way could the cherished "hairy-caps" be protected against the incursions of rats and salt water?

But a few days of fine Mediterranean weather, assisted by the exertions of some bustling regimental officers, and the vessel's worthy Commander, restored health, happiness, and pipeclay, set ensigns, who had studied under Jack Hannan, to pummel one another with "the gloves," sergeants to glee-singing, drums to rattle, fifes to squeak, and

turned the saloon, but lately almost deserted, into a symposium, where eating and drinking, perpetual and prodigious, testified to a copper-fastened strength of digestion seldom enjoyed in the precincts of St. James's.

In the management of troops on ship-board, that rare, that inestimable attribute, "tact," is peculiarly essential, over indulgence and *laissez faire* being pernicious to health, cleanliness, and discipline; while, on the other hand, martinet-ism, or "pipe-clay," as it is termed in barrack phraseology, frequently swells *ennui* into discontent, and ('tis only a step) forces discontent into insubordination. When a fault is committed, it must of course be punished, but let there be no "nagging," no worrying non-commissioned officers and privates about trifles. Be not a hypercritical observer of every trivial shortcoming in the matters of heel-ball and button-brush; suppress, as much as possible, your old-fashioned prejudices against a straggling love-lock, or superfluous bristle.

For all things immediately concerning the soldiers, the military officer "on watch" is responsible; at night, he occasionally inspects the ship above and below, and, in the course of his explorations, sees many strange sights. Guided by a sergeant carrying a lantern, the punctilious subaltern clambers up and stumbles down sea-going, and, therefore, breakneck ladders; groping in every frouzy hole, and greasy corner of decks and forecastle, that he may be sure no lights burn, except such as glimmer under the guardianship of sentinels.

Every part of the ship allotted to the soldiers is crammed with sleeping men of Gath wrapped in blankets and great coats, and so closely packed together that the officer has frequently to thread his way among the sweltering forms, on all fours, lest he put an inadvertent hoof on the broad and upturned countenance of some stertorous grenadier.

Peace be with you stout hearts ! those planks may be hard ; the air assuredly is not perfumed

With Sabæen odours  
From the spicy shore of Araby the blest.

Your suppers were neither light, nor digestible (according to the precepts inculcated in "What to eat, drink, and avoid"), and yet, your rest is sweeter far than many a bed of down can give.

At sunrise, one glorious morning, we passed Gibraltar ; of course all "turned out ;" the officers emerging from the dens below, arrayed after the fashion of travellers, who spend the night on the Righi-Culm,—that they may behold day dawn on the Alps,—to wit, in counterpanes, blankets, and mauds, disposed with more of grace than decency, the absence of pantaloons being here and there apparent ; but, for the sake of that marvellous panorama, lives there the man who would not have come forth in *puris naturalibus* had need been ? The soldiers gazed open-mouthed on "the Rock," asking eager questions as to how and when it came into British possession, and, in several instances, making observations so shrewd and to the point, that one began to think the *baton* of a field-marshal ought sometimes to have a place in the knapsack of the English private soldier.

Imperial scene ! Here crouches the most potent of lions, "Gib," sleeker-looking than usual, for the heats have not yet singed his coat. There frowns tawny Spain, "renowned, romantic land ;" and that long coast-line to the southward is the burning home of the Moor.

We may not land. The fortress sinks deeper and deeper in the billow, so the majority of us again dive to the fusty abyss below, for a "little more sleep, a little more slumber," till a joyful bell summons the "mess" to coffee and broiled ham.

Among the errors committed by the military administration, not the least was clogging the heels of the army with a large number of soldiers' wives. At home, under ordinary circumstances, the condition of these poor creatures is pitiable ; but amidst the vicissitudes of a campaign, it becomes shocking. Frequently, too, the "better halves" turn out useless to the troops : running restive, and refusing to bestir themselves in emergencies. For example, in the black hour of need, at Scutari, there were women who would not lend a helping hand ; to the disgrace of their sex, preferring dawdling gossip and a dram to the tender duties of charity ; and yet the picture is not all gloom. From out indolence and shame shone noble instances of virtue. Among those unlucky wives, there came and went, very angels of piety, meekness, and love. All honour to the gentle matrons whose hearts adversity could not steel, whose purity temptation could not taint. But before we condemn the "weaker vessels," the good-for-nothing dowdies, let us call to mind their abominable treatment in English barracks ; let us ask, "What chance had these neglected women of being chaste, sober, and honest? who ever cared to show them an example of good living?"\*

When armies take the field, the handy soldier, *nolens volens*, is constrained to exercise the functions of cook, washerwoman, maid-of-all-work ; and although his flavourless "boils" very naturally excite the disgust of M. Soyer, and his getting up of linen would be criticised at "White's," "the right man is in the right place" for a'that.

But, on a sudden, radiant as ivory, Malta starts out of the azure waves ; and then, all manner of telescopes are

\* "No woman should be allowed to embark on a service expedition."—GENERAL SIR CHARLES NAPIER.—Life, Vol. 1. page 252.



busy, and opera glasses, but lately intent on the twinkling *entre-chats* of Fanny Cerito, examine, with feverish earnestness, the grim bastions that made Caffarelli Dufalga to exclaim,—“*Nous sommes bien heureux qu'il y ait en quelqu'un dans la place pour nous en ouvrir les portes.*”

What have we here? A swarm of gaily-painted bumboats, laden with oranges and vegetables, cigars, and sour Sicilian wine; the swarthy little mariners thereof all hailing our coming with the screams, shrill and ceaseless, characteristic of the Mediterranean. Our men, lolling over the side, add a rough bass to the hubbub, and give vent to strange ideas concerning the Maltese population. I overheard two hulking specimens of the chaw-bacon Ridings thus discoursing: “Ai soy Jock,” quoth one, “be yon yaller chops Christians?” “Not a bit on it; they be haithens, that worship a false prophet,” was the intelligent reply. Imagine the feelings of a devout “Smitch,” most catholic of people, if he could guess that, somewhere in the foggy west, were heretics, ignorant enough to set the hated Moslem and himself in the same black list.

The Lazzaretto, and forts adjacent, were the quarters assigned to the Guards. Scarcely an agreeable appellation is Lazzaretto, being in a manner suggestive of plague spots and cholera; nevertheless, in reality, this station is pleasant enough, the galleries overhanging the quarantine harbour being cool lounging places, whence you get a charming view of the churches, convents, batteries, and palaces of which the Maltese metropolis is made up. One laments that so fair a prospect should be blurred with a blot of British make, that the Protestant Cathedral should be an ungraceful structure, quite out of sorts with surrounding objects. If it be true, that the drawings, from which this temple was erected, were the work of an engineer officer, chancing to be on duty in the island, we need feel no surprise at the architectural failure. A soldier whose

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youth has been spent in mastering the systems of Vauban and Cormontaigne, cannot be expected to rival the achievements of Palladio and Visconti. What a pity it is that we English have an occasional fancy for cramming square men into round holes.

Europe has no prettier town than Valetta. The cleanly streets of handsome houses, built of the beautiful native stone, the richly sculptured balconies, the ornate portals, produce striking effects, which are heightened and animated by the motley crowd circulating to and fro. The bearded Capucino—(picturesque and dirty)—the black Dominican, the Greek Antinous, the bony Arab, the dignified Moor, saunter about the *plaza*, amid saucy knots of those splendid corps, the 41st and 68th, frisky tars, and roaring guardsmen, surcharged with the creature comforts the *cafés* and casinos so cheaply supply. "Hang me," exclaimed, in my hearing, an exhilarated Fusilier, "if ever I see such a place as this here for a soldier; why you can hactually afford to axe a friend to smoke a cigar and drink a bottle of wine with you, like any genilman!"

Here, as elsewhere, the fair sex is the first object of the British officer's attention. Rustling along in black silk, and instead of fly-away bonnets, wearing the picturesque *faldetta*, (a sort of *mantilla*, but hardly so coquettish as that most alluring of head-dresses) the dark-eyed, olive-cheeked *signoras* recall to one's mind, very forcibly, the sparkling, trim-angled *Gaditanas*; but as the majority of us had neither Andalusian experiences nor predilections, the sombre Velasquez costume was voted dull; and there speedily arose a yearning after the rainbow-tinted robes of our own blushing *blondes*. The soldiers, on their side, attributed the prevalence of sad coloured apparel to a very melancholy cause: the ravages of cholera, which "has put all the folks of this 'ere *hiland* into mourning!"

Every humble lover of the beautiful, every subaltern

connoisseur in art, must reverence the memory of those Knights Hospitallers who enriched Valetta with so many splendid evidences of educated taste and of large public spirit. The stately cathedral of St. John, and innumerable convents (Catholicity is all powerful here) attest their piety ; and a long series of palaces indicate that comfort, ease, coolness, and good living were minded of by them.

*Dilettanti* affirm the mosaic pavement of San Giovanni to be the finest extant. It represents the coat of arms of four hundred knights, and is certainly a gorgeous blaze of well-harmonised colours. Jasper, porphyry, verd-antique, and all manner of rare marbles, have been pressed into this noble monumental service.

The governor now occupies the grand master's palace, once the home of La Valette, Villiers de L'Isle Adam, and great Nicholas Cotoner. The council-chamber, hung with finest tapestry (a present from Louis XIV.), and decorated with portraits of famous commanders of the Order, is a superb room. Maltese tradition hath it, that when the knights, affecting the airs and graces of fashion, took to horse-hair, powder, and the razor, a cloud capped the glory of the brotherhood. Judging from the pictures, I may not doubt the tale, for De Rohan and the recreant Hompesch simpering in bob-wigs and "barber'd seven times o'er," as we see them on these walls, bear about the same intellectual and physical likeness to the hirsute champions that built Ricasoli and discomfited the Moslem, as our "most gracious" Georges to the magnificent Plantagenets.

The Auberge de Castile (palace of the Spanish knights), a very beautiful building, has, under English rule, been converted into officers' quarters. The painted ceiling of the vestibule, though much damaged, still retains traces of its ancient splendour ; but the fresco, that once glowed on the walls of the banqueting hall—*chef-d'œuvre* of Italian art, it is said to have been—exists no more. The story of

the obliteration is a sad one. It would appear that on the occupation of Malta by our countrymen, in 1800, the officers of the — regiment were lodged in this sumptuous mansion ; of a sportive turn were those gallant gentlemen, consequently their abundant leisure was sometimes amused by shooting with air-guns and horse-pistols at the lovely host of cherubims and seraphims sitting up aloft the mess table. Military education must have been at a precious low ebb fifty years back ; the ordinary subaltern of our days, (not yet a highly cultivated man,) would, even in his cups, protest against the “fun” of such outrage.

The Hospitaller palaces have indeed seen better days. It is beneath their tarnished roofs—how gorgeously painted and gilded once !—that the beery foot-soldier snores off his debauch ; and in the grand saloon, where the warrior Priests, surrounded with all the imposing attributes of chivalry, took counsel together of old, Lieutenant Lismahago brews his whiskeytoddy, and smokes his shag tobacco.

In one respect Malta is staunchly conservative. Soldiership and priest-craft continue its specialities. Monks and *militaires* are still household gods. Incessantly, do regiments parade, and convent-bells summon the devout to their religious duties.

The native population, although zealous in their attachment to the papal Church, are by no means ill disposed towards the English government, mainly because Downing Street (for the nonce bottling intolerance), has wisely respected the prejudices of the governed. As an illustration of the liberal course, so happily pursued, I would mention that, whenever the antiquated coach of the R.C. Bishop rumbles past the Main Guard, the soldiery turn out, and “present arms,”—an honour of which both prelate and flock are exceeding proud.

“*Parva leves capiunt animos.*”

Would that poor Ireland had been treated in a like conciliatory spirit ! Would that Spooner and Co. denounced to deaf ears ; would they could be brought to confess the break-down of Protestantism, by act of Parliament !

Hard by Floriana parade-ground stands a Capuchin monastery, a cool and pleasant place, well suited to pious meditation ; its catacombs, however, are the chief attractions to the sight-seer. Descending into those spacious vaults, clean and unpolluted with aught offensive to the nose, you observe a series of niches very queerly tenanted, for in nearly every niche appears a defunct friar, clad in the brown vesture habitual to him when alive, and with head bowed, and hands clasped, the very posture in which the holy man is supposed to have given up the ghost.

Anything more hideous than these shrivelled relics of mortality it is impossible to conceive. Mark the parchment visages, the adust beards, the shrunk members of the beatified clergymen, and exclaim with Juvenal.

———"Mors sola fatetur  
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula."

It would seem that this Romanist mummydom is attained by a very simple process. The monk dies, the corpse is buried, and, for awhile, rests decently in the grave : it is then exhumed, and placed in an oven, heated with a slow fire ; after having been cooked in this way for a week, the baked capuchin is drawn forth, like a loaf of bread, re-invested with his old gaberdine, and set up all standing in his last home, to be a perpetual *memento mori* to the lusty *padres* with whom he lately begged, prayed, and crossed himself. This incorruptibility of dust and ashes is attributed to some local antiseptic influence possessed by earth and air. Time apparently passes by the wrinkled carrion without heeding it. On the score of good looks, indeed, there is little to choose between the

newest tenant and the reverend freeholder of 100 years.

The quick are comfortably lodged in neat white-washed cells, over the doors of which are painted monitory texts from the New Testament; at the back of the monastery, there is an extensive garden blooming with flowers, and rich in vegetable food. The chapel is only remarkable for the number of its confessional boxes, most of which, during my visit, were in working order, for I could see closely muffled damsels, whispering revelations of their peccadilloes into the absorbed ears of fat, oily friars.

In the course of a ride to Citta Vecchia—the ancient capital, which crowning a hill-top in the centre of the island, is a grand object, conspicuous far and near—you obtain an idea of Maltese country-scenery : dreary, flat, and scorched it is, seamed in every direction with tumble-down Tipperary-like stone walls and affording no refreshment to the aching eye-balls, beyond an occasional fringe of dusky olive-bushes. In truth Malta is the reverse of the island of Vancouver, the very loam that creates its smiling gardens, being often imported from Sicily ; whence, too, in a great measure, come the wine, oil, and corn, which feed the thrifty peasantry.

On your way to Citta, you pass San Antonio, a delicious villa (belonging *ex-officio* to the Governor) embosomed in gardens, and groves, golden with the perfumed Mandarin oranges, which are as manna in the wilderness to the traveller panting under a southern sun.

The city, once so celebrated, is now the dullest of country-towns, but very picturesque and interesting withal, because of its narrow winding streets, imposing mansions, (wearing at present a sad rackrent look,) pompous *cinquecento* cathedral, sombre convents, multitude of monkish piety ever sleek and fleshy, and swarms of pretty black-eyed beggar-children, that marvelling exceedingly at the cut of



your wide-a-wake and shooting coat, cluster like bees about you with ringing laughter, and with playful supplication. "*Charità signore, nix padre, nix madre, nix mangiare, charità, charità !*" Wonderful is the equanimity with which these sunburnt brats bear up against the loss of father and mother, wonderful the art with which they gloss over the exterior signs of an empty stomach :—mendicancy is a liar all the world over.

The Maltese Fencibles were stationed here ; a clean, smart regiment, very remarkable for the exemplary conduct of its non-commissioned officers and men. With the exception of the colonel commanding (Simcoe Baines, late 8th Foot) the officers are entirely *smitch* (a nickname for the islanders much in vogue amongst the English, the point of it I could not ascertain), with a large infusion of native marquises and counts, whose real property is said to be by no means commensurate with the length and sonorousness of their titles.

The lower classes of Valetta gabble a jargon of mixed Italian and Arabic, but the peasantry speak pure Arabic (at least the learned say so). In the parlours of "well conditioned" people, the *lingua Toscana* is the soft medium of conversation. In the counting-houses, too, the *bocca romana* almost universally prevails.

For a whole month, we had been enjoying the *dolce far niente* of the Mediterranean, had assisted at the Opera where Verdi reigned supreme, had discussed Omar Pacha's admirable strategy with quid-nuncs at the club (in the good old times the palace of the English knights, and by a singular coincidence still devoted to roast beef and plum-pudding) had, now and again, paraded in perspiring columns at dusty, glaring Floriana, had paid a desultory attention to the then scarcely appreciated Minié ; but notwithstanding, the Muscovite tarried in the Principalities ; the heart of Nicholas was hardened, despite the strapping

incarnations of porter and rump-steaks that enlivened Valetta. Oh that that subtle "demonstration" should have missed stays; that those reams of protocols, those bags-full of ultimatums should prove valueless, except to the butter man! There was now no help for it; so the government proclaimed war on the 27th of March, and began to grind the sword after a fashion new in military history.

"With shaking thoughts  
No hands can draw aright."

Infantry was shoveled out to Malta, but no artillery accompanied it; cavalry was apparently deemed superfluous in the *veni, vidi, vici* campaign dreamt of at Whitehall. The commissariat consisted of a few zealous, intelligent clerks, shackled with the "wise saws and modern instances" of those highly connected bureaucrats, Routine and Red-tape.

The ill-organized medical department was unequal to a strain. As for the baggage-train, I will quote the opinion of Sir De Lacy Evans, a first-rate authority. "As I happened to pass through Malta immediately after the commissary-general sent out by direction of Sir Charles Trevelyan, I asked by accident what means of transport had been provided, and I found that in order to provide for the army (then about 10,000 men) he had bought thirty mules and thirty carts—it may have been thirty-five, but I think I am correct in saying thirty was about the number." (*Speech in Parliament, July 19, 1855.*)

Furthermore, no Commander-in-Chief, no staff, no division leaders, but one brigadier (Col. Bentinck) had appeared as yet. In a word, every essential of an army was either absent or imperfect, except a splendid body of infantry, under active regimental officers. For want of Adjutants-General and Quarter-Masters General, this noble foot could not be shaped into brigades and divisions.

As the garrison of the island had been immensely augmented, without sufficient notice to the local authorities, prices rose to an unprecedented height, and starvation looked the poor in the face.

Now did the general commanding in Malta bear him as became his Peninsular reputation. Unfairly burdened with a heavy responsibility, without clear instructions from home; he personally cared for the health and well being, the feeding, tenting, housing of the armed masses, unexpectedly confided to his charge. The honoured name of Ferguson will not easily be forgotten by the scanty remnants of the veteran troops that went eastward in 1854.

When the Household Brigade was ordered abroad, the military Court of Chancery had come to no decision relative to the suitability of the Minié rifle for the general use of infantry. As yet, that amazing tool was in the possession of only a few *select* men in every regiment. Hence, Lord Hardinge, who, it must be confessed, did much for the improvement of English small arms, judged it expedient that the Guards should take "Brown Bess" to Malta; but, at the same time, he despatched thither cases of Miniés, under the charge of a competent instructor of musketry, Captain Lane Fox. Thus, his lordship provided us with two strings to our bow; we had old and new weapons ready to our hands; if we took the inferior article, we had only ourselves to blame. Thanks to Captain Fox's exertions in favour of modern betterment, and a few experiments, a right verdict was at length delivered. At Scutari, old Brown Bess was marched off ignominiously to the Ordnance stores, and the Minié maiden became the faithful consort of every foot soldier, How completely have subsequent events substantiated the truth of Fox's arguments!

We will now turn to another picture, and see how our allies managed matters. On the 24th of March, the *avant garde* of the French expeditionary force touched at Malta, *en route* for Gallipoli, on the Dardanelles. It was composed of a strong battalion of the renowned Chasseurs de Vincennes, a battery of artillery, and some sappers, under the orders of Generals Canrobert, Bosquet, and De Martimprey (chief of the staff). A number of the Chasseurs being allowed to go ashore, were received by the British soldiers with warm cordiality ; such bowing, and scraping, and shaking of hands, had never, perhaps, been seen in the *Strada Reale* before. The impossibility of entering into *vivâ voce* conversation, was, only at the first flush, an impediment to intimacy, for an adjournment to the *cafés* and grog-shops discovered brandy and cigars, to be satisfactory mediums for the expression of mutual good-will.

Towards evening, parties of the new fraternity swaggered arm-in-arm through the streets chanting war-songs, peculiar to their respective nations ; this man bellowing "The British Grenadiers," while his big-breeched companion shouted "*Partant pour la Syrie.*" The harmony was of course not particularly agreeable, nor was the gait of the allies as steady as purists might desire ; but if valour and generosity and kindness take a drop too much now and then, where is the Pharisee spotless enough to rebuke the backsliding ?

Just as the French transports were weighing, the sergeants of a "crack" British regiment sent, as a present, to the Chasseurs Non-Coms, a huge hamper filled with "bacca," vegetables, oranges, larded with a few sly bottles of *eau-de-vie*, the receipt of which was acknowledged in the following concise terms—

"Aux Messieurs les Sous Officiers du—Régiment de Ligne de sa Majesté Britannique—Merci, Messieurs, mille fois, merci.

“ J’ai l’honneur d’être Messieurs,  
“ Votre très humble et très obeissant serviteur,  
“ BARBE DE BOUC,  
“ Serjent-Major, Chasseurs de Vincennes,  
“ (3me battalion.)”

The passage of the French troops was now continuous. Having been previously organized into brigades, &c., by General Rostolan, at Marseilles, our allies landed in Turkey in a satisfactory condition : every brigade being attended by its general, staff, and artillery.

It was observed, that in place of the weighty shako, our gallant friends wore the light and becoming crimson *kepi*, (forage-cap)—in this particular, wisely following the example of the Russians, under Diebitch, in the Turkish campaign of 1829. Certain of our superior officers were a little scandalized by so striking a departure from routine ; “such things,” they said, “had never been done in the Peninsula, and for their parts, nothing should ever induce them to sanction similar deviations from H.M. regulations.” Of course not ; men of ripe age and limited professional experience are rarely guided by circumstances, or influenced by foreign improvement.

The *bond-fide* occupation of Ottoman territory by the French had the effect of spurring the “coalition” into action. March 31st Sir George Brown arrived, and, taking with him the Rifles, started for Gallipoli a few days afterwards. The 28th, 44th, 50th, and 93rd regiments were also speedily on the same tack.

On the 7th of April, it was bruited abroad that Lord Stratford de Redcliffe had pressed to have British troops sent to Constantinople. Tidings of great joy these, both to officers and men, who alike were hot for action. Accordingly, General Ferguson, (on the 11th April,) despatched the “Forties,”—41st, 47th, and 49th regiments

—under the excellent Colonel Adams, to the Bosphorus. On the 21st of the same month, this hardy van was followed by the Guards. Never, surely, had troops quitted the Quarantine Harbour so magnificent in appearance, more perfectly disciplined, or animated by a nobler spirit than the Household Brigade.

“ Fût-elle au fond de la Russie,  
Vieux Grenadiers, suivons un vieux soldat.

Gloriously has that Old Guard justified its reputation !

## CHAPTER II.

## HAIDAR PACHA.

In Asia—Scutari Cemetery—Princes' Islands—Mustering—Arrival of Lord Raglan—Staff—"Our System"—Is there a good time coming?—The Generals—Land-transport—Horse dealing—Baggage parade—Teachings of Experience—Health of the Troops—Rations—Sports—"A drop too much"—Turkish forbearance—"Bono Johnny"—The Sultan's dinner party—Highlanders—Generals put their heads together—Ottoman Army—Cock-a-hoop—"Shaves."

During the absence of the General-in-Chief, Lord Raglan, the troops, camped at Scutari, were under the orders of Sir De Lacy Evans. Their tents dotted the pleasant plain of Haidar Pacha, which stretches from the huge barrack of Selimnieh (destined as Scutari hospital to possess a melancholy interest for all time) to the pretty village of Kadi-Koi—the ancient Chalcedon.

Delicious scene! At our feet rippled the limpid waters of the Bosphorus. On the opposite (European) shore towered the airy minarets of Stamboul; while to the north of our camp passed that celebrated road, along which the caravan wends its pilgrim-journey to Mecca, and Musulman troops march for an Asiatic campaign.

Almost immediately after quitting the town of Scutari, this great highway runs for three good miles through dense groves of cypress. Beneath that funereal shade moulder innumerable bones of the Ottoman; for, not-

withstanding four centuries of residence in Europe, the orthodox Turk of Constantinople is homesick, after a fashion, and especially loves to deposit the dust of his kindred in Asia ; hence, the cemetery of Scutari is renowned throughout Islam.

Turning from the tombs, and looking southward, we have in our eye the Princes' Islands, lying like nosegays on the gentle bosom of Marmora—temples dedicated to sherbet and the *nargileh*, to Frankish flirtation, and Armenian pic-nics are those fragrant islets—while, far in the back-ground, gleam the snowy peaks of august Olympus.

The army, or rather the infantry element of an army, accumulated apace. Most mornings saw leviathan steamers letting go anchor in the Bosphorus ; and an evening seldom passed, without a fresh uprising of tents. But cavalry, artillery, military stores of all sorts, were yet afar off tossing somewhere in sailing transports.

In too many quarters, indeed, there were indications that the administration still clung to the fatal hallucination of peace, when there could be no peace, still tried to believe that a "demonstration" within a mile of Constantinople must be successful. "Floriana and its parades failed," some said, "because Malta is so distant from the Pruth ; but this concentration of ours at Scutari has a real business look, which *must* tell !"

Unluckily, the Czar knew that the government of England was built up of incoherent materials. He had faith in his old familiar friend, "*ce cher* Aberdeen." His Greek spies informed him, how on the heights of Chalcedon stood no army ready to combat, only a stout corps of the unrivalled British Foot ; therefore, he stayed not his hand. Old birds are not to be caught with chaff.

And yet the crafty Nicholas committed an egregious blunder. Tyrant-like, he laid all stress on ministers and



ignored the people. It passed his comprehension that the middle and lower classes of any country could be powerful enough, and honest enough, to coerce their paltering irresolute rulers into a bloody defence of right against might. It was this despised *Vox populi, vox dei* that brought disaster to the very threshold of the mighty house of Romanoff.

Early in May, Lord Raglan, the commander of the forces, attended by a numerous retinue of aides-de-camp, arrived from Paris, and established his head-quarters in a *kiosque*, (summer-house) immediately in rear of the Guards' camp, and within a stone's throw of the village of Kadi-koi. And now, like mushrooms, cropped up generals, and all the gaudy paraphernalia of a staff. A large portion of the immense barracks of Selimnieh was turned into offices for the different departments; the organization of regiments into brigades, and of brigades into divisions, commenced; hence, bustle became master of the situation, fidget reigned paramount.

How shall we describe the staff? A shrewd thinker ("J.O.") has remarked, "To serve on the staff is the legitimate ambition of every officer. The pay is double that of regimental officers, the chances of promotion and distinction more than double, the life pleasanter and easier. These advantages and privileges are most reasonably assigned to staff-officers, in order to secure for that important branch of the military profession the very best men in the service."

But was the staff of 1854 composed of "the very best men" in the army? Without intending any disrespect, we may answer—Hardly. The staff officers of that momentous period, with some bright exceptions, were neither more nor less than regimental officers, be-plumed, and on horseback. In fact, technical knowledge, and scientific acquirements cannot be said to have obtained their full share of the "plums" of the service. It was too often a drawing-

room conjuror, in mess-room parlance called "good interest," that beckoning young gentlemen from the ranks of their battalions, clapped spurs on their heels, set cocked hats on their heads, and bade them go forth—eyes, ears, brains of the host !

Such was "OUR SYSTEM" in 1854. A system worthy of France before the revolution, but out of place among Englishmen of the nineteenth century. In these matter-of-fact days, Minerva does not spring armed at all points from the skull of Jove. To professional skill, there is no royal road, only the steep and narrow path.\*

The observation that "there is a stubborn tenacity of life in every old English nuisance, whether physical or moral," is strikingly borne out in the case of our military cankers. In spite of all that has come to light, in spite of all sayings and writings, that elderly tuft-hunter, "Our system,"—he was first presented at court when Charles the Second, of glorious and pious memory, was king—still hobbles on, still buys and sells, bullies the weak, and truckles to the strong ; and the horrors and errors of 1854-55 being in a fair way to be clean forgotten, we must make up our minds, I suppose, to carry this inexorable old man of the land upon our shoulders for a while longer.

Patience ; we need not lose heart—military reform will come at last. The reformatory flood will flow all the

\* In the *Times* of Feb. 22, 1856, a well-informed writer made the following statement:—"Why did it happen that out of 291 officers serving on the staff of the British army in May, 1854, two months after we had declared war against Russia, only fifteen had been trained at the senior department of Sandhurst? Although 216 officers obtained certificates of qualification at the senior school of Sandhurst in the period from 1836 to 1854, *only* twenty have been employed during the whole of that time. In 1852, there were but *seven* officers on the *whole staff* of the British army who had passed through the senior school."

merrier for having been so long dammed up. A great day for the British soldier—ay, and for the British nation, too—when army rank is no more bought and sold, when commissions are dealt out to the deserving of the rank and file with a free hand, when the education of officers is changed from a sham into a reality, when the staff from being “pretty summer wear,” a *dilettanti* occupation for high-spirited youths of family and fortune, becomes an onerous speciality, a practical business corps of scientific soldiers, prepared for their duties by a severe and distinct training; when, in a word, the great bill—“Free trade in brains among the brave,”—passes both Houses, and the reproach, wrung from the satirist’s heart by the corruptions of Imperial Rome—

“Haud facile emergunt quorum virtutibus obstat  
Res angusta domi——.”

shall cease to be applicable to constitutional England.

The lower and middle classes should awake, and look to this matter. It concerns them deeply.

As for the generals, some three or four, whose deeds of arms shone brightest in the pages of *Hart*, monopolized discussion. “Is the brave and zealous Brown the coming man?” “What say you to the indefatigable Eyre?” were questions often repeated; but the greater number of us, I think, looked elsewhere for chiefs in a fight, à l’outrance, with Gortchakoff and Luders. It was in favour of Evans and Campbell that the majority of votes would have been polled. These two expert veterans, it must be owned, had overpowering claims to our confidence. Both had served their apprenticeship under Wellington, both had led stirring public lives, both had commanded armies in the field, and, what was praiseworthy at this juncture, both had gathered to their sides personal staffs of accomplished officers. It is not strange, then, that Sir Colin and Sir De Lacy should have been favourites with the troops.

The utter insufficiency of means of land-transport greatly perplexed the authorities, and judging from the ever-varying complexion of the memorandums, orders, and notifications on the subject, which issued continually from the *bureaux* of Selimnieh, it was unlikely a satisfactory solution of the problem would be promptly reached. At one moment, we were assured that the commissariat (hapless institution! doomed from the very beginning to be the scape-goat of every administrative failure or shortcoming) would provide for the conveyance of tents, sick, baggage, and the like; an hour afterwards, it was noised abroad that that department declined to engage in such duties, that the poor Treasury camel, starved and cuffed about as it was, had quite enough to do to provide the troops with daily bread, without undertaking any fresh burdens. Then did a public-spirited man in authority hit upon the policy of making the captains responsible for the carriage of the *impedimenta* of their respective companies; naturally enough, this scheme was unfavorably received by those so seriously menaced in that delicate point—the pocket. The intended victims remonstrated, inquiring whence the purchase-money of so many horses and mules was to be derived? how losses were to be indemnified? meekly adding, that the project was unprecedented in military finance. These objections silenced the prescriber of the nostrum. The alarmed centurions heard no further about the matter.

At length, a definite order was published, directing all officers to supply themselves with bât-horses by a certain day; and a few captains and subalterns of sporting repute were despatched, under the tutelage of Greek or Armenian interpreters, into the neighbouring villages, to purchase “baggageers” for the use of their several battalions. As was to be expected from the nature of the machinery employed, and from the presence of those necessary evils—

the dragomans—the horses collected were both few and costly; however, they certainly did credit to the judgment of the amateur “vets,” being excellent animals, if anything, too good for the work required of them.

By dint of higgling and haggling in the horse-bazaar of Stamboul, for about a fortnight, our officers managed to secure a large personalty of riding nags, and sumpter mules—all sorts, sizes, and colours, good, bad, and indifferent, according to the purchaser’s “cuteness,” or credit with the Messrs. Hansom; whereupon, the division generals determined to inspect these private baggage-trains *en grande tenue*, that is to say, laden *cap-a-pie* with the tents, saddle-bags, and portmanteaus of their owners—just as if the army were about to start on a march across the Balkans.

The baggage parade, at which I assisted—a sample of all the rest, I believe—was a most provoking affair to principals, whatever it might have been to unconcerned spectators. Everything went amiss. Steeds marked out, by fiery mettle or Arabian ancestry, for more honourable vassalage than the portorage of camp-properties, positively refused to budge an inch, and concentrating their frisky energies on an unbroken series of kickings and plungings, quickly rid themselves of their vile loads, to the rage and despair of masters and grooms; other animals, condemned by plebeian extraction to be “Houyhnhum” hodmen, were scarcely more manageable, for no sooner did the poor creatures feel how sorely the new pack-saddles galled, how lop-sided and ill-balanced rode the clumsy bullock-trunks, than they meekly assumed the recumbent position, which the more energetic did their best to vary with a roll. Flesh and blood could not stand these aggravations, the *bât-men* began to curse and to swear, and to rain showers of blows upon the piteous beasts, instead of quietly remedying the mischief, which ignorance of

"common things," had perhaps mainly brought about. But look! a mule has broken loose, and, with ill-packed luggage of all shapes and descriptions clattering about his back and flanks, is careering like a fiend among his brethren, many of whom, frenzied by his wanton pranks, tear away too, and so, anarchy reigns supreme—rearing, biting, snorting, kicking, everywhere. "There goes my new bullock-trunk squashed like a pancake! and the tent-pole shivered! and Jones's zinc tub smashed into smithereens!" Officers, in an agony, lest their property be destroyed, run wildly about, now vainly coaxing their Rosinantes, now abusing their servants. Exasperated generals splutter directions, excited colonels scream in strong language, all to no purpose, for the tumult is not to be appeased with words alone; presently, however, some Turks, who had been amused spectators of our troubles, interfered between us and the refractory beasts, with such happy effect, that an armistice was speedily concluded. The animals were led peaceably to their tethers, and we set about gathering together our household goods, now scattered over the field of strife. We were wiser and more humble after this trial, for it taught us that the muleteer's cunning, and no end of useful dodges beside (which in our unwarlike blindness we had despised) are not learnt in a day.

Throughout our stay at Scutari, the health of the troops was remarkably good, the per centage of sick being generally below the home average; the rations, too, were all that soldiers could desire. *Apropos* of the creature comforts, I overheard the following conversation in a company's tent, within ear-shot of mine own. First private *loquitur*, "Well, Bill, these ere rations aint bad; give me my vittals sweet and juicy, and I'm not the chap to *hargify* about the weight of the mess; little and good, says I." Second private, "I don't agree with ye, Tom, I



always puts quantity in the front rank, and quality in the rear. After my dinner, d'ye see, I likes to have all my buttons a standing 'at attention,' because I knows then as how I've got a belly-full." We may recollect that our old and pleasant acquaintance, "the fat boy," was partial to similar gastric tension. Strange are the diversities of human happiness, when to feel as "if your jacket were buttoned" can be accounted the *acmé* of past prandial gratification.

When the parades, "fatigues," &c., of the day were over, the men used to amuse themselves with quoits and cricket, to the no slight amazement of the lazy Turks, who could not be made to enter into the fun of throwing *coombarah* (cannon balls) about, and of racing to and fro like mad under a broiling sun. An intelligent Pacha (he had been educated in France) having, by a train of reasoning unknown to me, arrived at the ingenious conclusion that these national sports of ours were punishments inflicted for drunkenness and insubordination, gravely asked me, if it were true that the cat-o'-nine-tails had been altogether superseded by this arduous course of batting and bowling? I did all I could to enlighten my friend as to the real state of the case, but it was clear he did not believe me. The fact of so much exertion being expended *gratis*, all for pleasure's sake, exceeded the polite dawdler's comprehension.

In general, our soldiers behaved excellently well; in truth, had it not been for one constitutional flaw—thirst, root of all Anglo-Saxon backsliding—our virtues might have claimed comparison with the morality of Cromwell's iron-sides; but, unfortunately, tempters came: lean and hungry Greeks, who prowled about the tents with bottles of *raki* (a vile sort of brandy) secreted in the folds of their enormous breeches. The very odour of this alcoholic beastliness too often overthrew the praise-worthy resolutions of amiable, but "dry," Bill, Pat, and Sandy. So in-

toxication of the superlative degree became rife in our "lines." Under the poisonous influence of that abominable fire-water, big fellows lay as if dead. The streets of Scutari, once so staid and quiet, re-echoed with oaths. The natives were insulted—the patriarchal beards of *Hadji* fared roughly sometimes—and more than once, women's veils (holies of holies, according to the Mohammedan notion) were profaned by the grimy touch of toss-pot Lotharios; and yet, even under this last provocation, the Osmanli continued long-suffering, never evincing a disposition to give poor tipsy "Johnny" a taste of their minds in that most eloquent of forms—the knife. What strange first impressions of western civilization the sedate, almost anchorite, Eastern must have deduced from the lushy vagaries of the red-coats!

"Bono Johnny" has become historic. Every one knows the phrase, and yet none can tell whether it originated with Briton, Turk, or Frenchman. Although all three nations continually used it, I think the expression was most indiscriminately applied by us English. In our mouths it included foreigners of every language and complexion, Zouaves, Ottoman sentinels, Jew money changers, Greek hucksters, the, as yet impalpable, "Muscov," were invariably spoken of as "Johnnys." One day I heard a soldier's wife address a snug Parisian *epicier*, whom the probability of war prices had dragged from the Faubourg Montmartre to stinking Pera, in these free and easy terms. "I say Johnny boy, give us a couple of hounces o' tea, will ye?" I shall not attempt to describe the indignant stare which the intelligent *bourgeois* (who, doubtless, supposed the word "Johnny" to be fraught with meaning disrespectful, if not odious) opened on his slatternly but familiar customer. On the other hand, when a British soldier passed a group of Turks, he was sure to be gravely saluted with "Bono Johnny;" and occasionally (our friends



being in a talkative mood) the following opinions were added to the benediction. *Ingliz bono, Frances bono, Turco bono, Muscov no bono.*" At the mention of this latter people, it was observed that the Moslem uniformly drew their hands sharply athwart their throats—a sign, doubtless, that if all men had their due, every "Ruski" would be decapitated.

Soon after the arrival of Marshal St. Arnaud, Lord Raglan, and the Duke of Cambridge, they were bidden to a magnificent banquet by the Sultan, who however favoured the Western warriors with but little of his august presence on the occasion. Debarred by inflexible rule and precedent from sitting at meat with Christians, the Padishah merely conversed with his distinguished guests (in not very voluble French) for a few minutes before dinner was announced, and then, handed over Marshal, Lord, and Duke to the care of the accomplished, able, and, I'm told, honest Minister of Foreign Affairs, Redchid Pacha. The feast is said to have gone off capitally. The *cuisine française* exquisite, and the after dinner rhetoric of St. Arnaud and Redchid very animating—all raw-head and bloody bones extermination of the Muscovite. Not the least noticeable part of the entertainment was the presence in the court-yard of the palace, of a guard of honour, composed of the 93rd Highlanders, gorgeous in fillibeg and ostrich feathers. It must be confessed, that "the habit, fit for speed, succinct," of the goodly Gael, rather scandalized the Mussulman, and the hybrid Græco-Italico citizens of Pera had not the good taste to admire the pibroch,

A few days after the *fête*, the Marshal and Lord Raglan, attended by the Seraskier, Riza Pacha, left for Varna, for the purpose of taking counsel with Omar Pacha. The bulk of what passed between the illustrious trio remains a secret, but it soon leaked out that the Turkish chief

strenuously urged the immediate occupation of Varna by an allied army-corps, arguing that the very arrival of French and English soldiers (even supposing them to be unprepared for more active co-operation) on that great strategic point, would afford the Ottoman troops considerable moral support. Nor is Omar's persistence in pressing his suggestion at all surprising. His situation at this time was extremely critical, he was seriously menaced along the whole of his extended line, while, on his right flank, on the Bulgarian bank of the Danube too, Paskiewitch and Schilders (then reputed the first engineer in Europe) had begun to break ground before Silistria. No wonder, if the *Sirdar* grew impatient at our Scutari field-days.

When at Schumla, the two generals-in-chief reviewed the Turkish garrison of the "Virgin fortress," and the French marshal, in one of his curious letters, has recorded the following opinion of those tough troops. "I found an army, where I expected to see a rabble, a horde of men badly clothed, badly armed, badly equipped, but capable of manœuvring, obeying, conquering, and dying." Subsequent events have proved the soundness of St. Arnaud's judgment.

Hardly had the *Caradoc* (the steamer devoted to Lord Raglan's use) anchored in the Bosphorus, on her return from the Black Sea, before myriads of *canards, anglicé* "shaves," took wing. Extravagant tales circulated among the *gobemouches*. "It's all settled, we cross the Balkans immediately, here's fun!" "What, *minus* baggage-train, and *ambulance*, eh?" "The war won't last long, we shall run across Bulgaria, chaw up Paskiewitch, annihilate Gortchakoff, and return to England for the pheasant shooting, crowned with laurels, and all that sort of thing, you know!" In a word, we were to slay our enemy, and eat him on a vacation trip!

## CHAPTER III.

## KEEPING A BIRTHDAY.

Storm—Man drowned—Sir George Brown—Guns and Generals arrive—Sappers demand tools—Doctors cry aloud for physic—"Birthday parade"—Coming events cast their shadows before—Loyal merry-making—Turkish hospital-treatment—Patience with the "Sick Man"—Light division, to the front—How volunteering worked—The Sultan's inspection—A troublesome subject—Himalaya—Varna, ho !

One afternoon, while our snug party of four—the Fates have dealt hardly by that *quartette*—were at dinner on a mossy bank, just outside the tents, the balmy breeze suddenly chopped round to a raw east wind, and then, uprose a dense pillar of dust from behind a canvass-capped hill, about a quarter of a mile to the rear ; at the same time, the horizon grew black as ink, and the Bosphorus began to foam upon the beach. It was clear that not a moment ought to be lost ! We jumped up, seized our plates and dishes, and, with neat-handed celerity, the simple banquet was relaid in a well-pitched tent. In the nick of time ; driven by the blast, on came that dusty column, darkening the very air, and with its infinite particles (they pierced the canvass roof like needles) thickly powdering every article we possessed. It swept by, and now burst forth a thunder-storm, which for flash, roar, rain, I have not seen equalled, even in the tropics. Of course we all,



more or less, got a share of the deluge ; for the tents were of every sort, good, bad, and indifferent ; some, being new, resisted the wet pretty well—others, said to have served the Egyptian campaign, were downright sieves. However, generally speaking, officers and men, who had been wise enough to dig a trench round about their habitations, had little to complain of, beyond, perhaps, the obstinacy of a streamlet, which would persist in trickling between the sheets, or purling capriciously among portmanteaux, saddle-bags, and the like ; but the thoughtless “Johns,” whom the sunny aspect of Kadi-Koi had deluded into neglect of drainage, were enabled to form an idea how very inconvenient a flood is, when it invades the domestic privacy. The books, boots, epaulettes, under-raidment, and the thousand cherished knick-nacks of neglectful subalternism, floated recklessly about, plastered o’er with a slimy and deteriorating compound of dust and rain. For awhile, the efforts of ammunition servants, to check these manifold mischiefs, were about as successful as the memorable stand made by Mrs. Partington against the encroachments of the Atlantic ; however, the rage of the tempest soon died out, the sun again struggled into gorgeous being, and all hands went so heartily to work to repair damage, that our humid, sticky economies were quickly as well as could be expected. Would to God clammy blankets and damp linen had been our sole griefs !

Haidar Pacha is scored from east to west with deep gullies, which—nothing more than dry ditches in fine weather—are turned, by a heavy fall of rain, into roaring, rushing torrents. Such was their condition on the night of the waterspout, when two officers of the 93rd endeavoured to find their way from one quarter of the camp to another. The wind blew fresh, the darkness was pitchy, so the poor fellows lost their reckoning. For a time, they groped about in silence ; afterwards they shouted for help,

but none heeded them. On a sudden, they slip, they cannot recover themselves; they have plunged headlong into a ravine; a surging flood is whirling them toward the Bosphorus. It is the matter of the twinkling of an eye; one drenched wretch grasps at the bough of an overhanging tree. Thanks to God! he has it in his hold, and, more dead than living, scrambles up to dry land. The other soldier dies; next day, we found his corpse caught in some brambles, at the point where the cataract was vomited into the sea. The waters were all gone then; the wild tide, in which the poor Lieutenant perished, had dwindled into a puddle, scarcely deep enough to moisten a lady's slipper. The name of the hapless lad was Macnish. We dug his grave on the lovely headland of Selimnieh. For a time he lay there solitary, but now, hundreds of tall fellows are stretched beside him. Sacred to courage rarely equalled, and to endurance without example, that ground will be for ever dear to the English people.

Weeks fly by, and Lieutenant-General Sir George Brown has come up from Gallipoli, bringing with him the entire British force stationed there, with the exception of the 4th Regiment. Stiffly does this brave soldier withstand the new-fangled doctrines of that blatant youngster—**ARMY REFORM**. With zeal, worthy a better cause, he strives in behalf of "as you were,"—capillary and integumentary. Nor does Sir George labour singly at his task of propping up the shaky constitution of military things. He is backed up by a few old officers with prejudices strong as his own, but with talents, deserts, and services immeasurably inferior. According to the theory of martinet toryism, "a pre-Raphaeltism of equipment, and an archæology of weapons," are indispensable to the genius of the Anglo-Saxon musqueteer. "The British Grenadier" must be close shaved, must be buckled up in an unyielding composition of brass and pig-skin, termed a stock, must

be bandaged with buffalo-hide belts of great weight and inconvenient adjustment, must be cased in a scant garment of "devil's dust" serge, garnished with white tape, or—be the British Grenadier no more. Strip him, ye innovating Delilahs, of his mediæval harness, and the poor fellow is as Sampson shorn, the shadow of a Peninsular Die-hard. Woe to the sentry who, apprehensive of a fainting fit, or with premonitory symptoms of strangulation, has put aside his regulation dog-collar! Woe to the officer, of Indian experience, who has covered his forage cap with the linen envelope universal in Bengal! Woe, doubly woe, to the presumptuous wight, who, envious of the capillary decorations, bristling on the countenances of our gallant allies, has begun to encourage a mild moustache!

Two or three field-batteries (which have suffered considerable loss in horses during the voyage) and more generals have dropped in; the new-comers being Major-General the Earl of Lucan, appointed to the command of the cavalry division (which is still in embryo), and his brigadiers, Colonel the Hon. Yorke Scarlett, 5th Dragoon Guards, and Colonel the Earl of Cardigan, 11th Hussars.

Sappers, also, have reached us; *minus* tools, in a great measure; the ammunition is still inadequate to the prodigal waste of "service;" the surgeons cry aloud for medical necessaries, commensurate with the bloody requirements of a campaign; the ambulance waggons, we are told, have only lately been commenced in the Woolwich work-shops! Everywhere there is a great cry and very little wool. How chanced these short-comings? Did men in office suppose that our battles would be as the battles of the middle ages, when mailed knights belaboured one another the live-long day without giving or receiving a gash?

MAY 24.—A grand parade of the British army, in honor of the Queen's birthday. The massive battalions, standing



like walls of red granite on the sunny slopes, to the north of Lord Raglan's house, were a spectacle worthy of old England ; and then, the "marching past,"—could anything be imagined more imposing than the solemn advance of the ponderous Guards, more warlike than the brisker step of the kilted Scots, more devil-may-care than the tread of rough and ready old line corps like the 7th, 23rd, 33rd, and 50th ? But there was an unpretending, although important, element in the day's work, which must not pass unnoticed. For the first time, the thin edge of the military reform wedge got a hold. The white-pantalooned Guardsmen actually manoeuvred without stocks ! Hurra ! the Minister-of-War, ever ready to consult the soldier's comfort, (there's no denying the Duke of Newcastle that praise) has closed this part of the pipeclay controversy by ruling, that non-com. officers and privates shall no more be strangled—even by "regulation." It is useless to tell how bitterly the conservative party bewailed this token of professional degeneration ! this pandering to (the common sense of ?) that "radical *Times*," as "hee-haw" indignation expressed it.

Thanks to the liberality of the officers, the men amused themselves on this royal afternoon (and prodigiously surprised the Moslem) with the rustic games dear to our west country peasantry. The Cornish hug, climbing the greased pole, jumping in sacks, the wheel-barrow race, were all satisfactory achievements ; but what most tickled the fancy of the spectators was the grinning through a horse-collar, a capital bit of tom-foolery, a *chef-d'œuvre* of village farce ! I have seldom heard more genuine applause than that which rewarded the final grimace of the successful competitor, a curiously ugly, but withal waggish, Coldstreamer, who certainly had it all his own way in the art of making mouths with comical effect.

At night we had an illumination. For a week previously

the handy men of the Guards and Highlanders, had been busy building with pork barrels, odds and ends of planks, evergreen boughs, any waifs or strays they could lay hands upon, a sort of commemoration pillar, which, on completion, they garnished with festoons of the little paper lanterns, used by the Turks to make darkness visible in the streets of Stamboul. At 9 p.m. these lanterns were lighted, and enchanted was the camp with the effect produced. Drums struck up, fifes squeaked, bag-pipes droned, jolly voices roared, till the small hours, the coarse but exhilarating doggrel—

“ The 'tillery fight like h— boys,  
The horse like devils fight,  
But neither light nor heavy horse  
Nor thundering cannoneers,  
Can stem the tide of the foeman's pride  
Like the British bayonetteers ! ”

No idle boasts those of yours, my merry men ! however many the glasses you may toss off, the alcohol kindles no Dutch courage in your hearts ; *there* lies the right stuff, pure and unadulterated, *there* burns the real old Norman-English flame, unquenchable, irresistible, everlasting.

After our departure from Scutari, the Turkish authorities, supposing this gigantic May-pole to be, in some mysterious manner, connected with Christian rites, placed it under the protection of a military guard, but, in spite of the utmost watchfulness, the loyal gimcrack soon tumbled to pieces.

In company with a regimental surgeon (who would be C.B. at this moment, if zeal and ability had any blood-relationship with British military decorations), I visited the great hospital of the Turks, situated about a quarter of a mile from the Haidar Pacha camp. It is a large and handsome building, enclosing a quadrangle, in the centre of which, stands a commodious bath-house, and a fountain



of ever playing water.\* In the vast, well-aired wards we found several wounded heroes of Kalafat and Citate, who really appeared to be well cared for; indeed, both of us wondered at the comfort generally apparent. The beds were hung with mosquito curtains, and by the side of every patient stood a little table (furnished with a drawer) on which were placed a drinking cup, a tin platter, and a bowl, full of some simple decoction of herbs. In the way of physic (as we understand the word) little was to be seen or smelt; but there is nothing strange in that, for the Osmanli have the greatest repugnance to drugs and boluses, and cannot be brought to gulp a dose, except by compulsion; the attempt to combat death with a blue pill being the very height of impiety in their eyes. "How very odd," some people may say, "these Ottoman soldiers have no regard for life. They will not make an effort to prolong their existence!" Why should they? Look at the way the Porte treats her maimed or chronically diseased veterans, driving them forth to die in a ditch (if unsuccessful in the begging line), and inveigh, no more against the perversity of the stricken wretches that, refusing the knife, betake themselves to prayer, and, when the dread hour comes, die with Roman fortitude.

From the order and cleanliness discernible in this model establishment, from the satisfactory look of the sick, and from the comparative intelligence of the Italian and Armenian surgeons, we have some right to hope that a properly organized hospital administration looms in the future of Turkey. But in this, as in other respects, we must have patience with the "sick man;" we must not expect to quack him into health on a sudden; we must not even dream of seeing the executive of this much-abused empire reformed, and purified within a few months, or

\* When this hospital came into our possession, the baths and fountain were suffered to fall to ruin.

even years. No, in pursuit of their generous ends, it behoves the Western Powers to move rather as tortoises, than as hares, to work bit by bit, to descend to a gentle finesse with the traditions and prejudices of a jealous, stubborn people. Above all, let no attempts at proselytism be suffered, winked at even, by the British Embassy; unless our divines be curbed on this point, farewell to English influence with the Porte—farewell to Ottoman regeneration.

Being now far advanced in May, the heat has grown so oppressive, that no parade takes place without two or three soldiers fainting in the ranks; however, these fits are less numerous, since the promulgation of the Newcastle Magna Charta abolishing stocks, and there is every reason to believe that, when we have become acclimatised, and routine has been forced by public opinion into letting out a few more reefs, we shall weather a storm as well as our neighbours. At all events, it will not be the men's fault if mishap befall: *they* are unexceptionable: veterans of from five to fifteen years' service; strong, hardy, well-intentioned fellows, whom no nation on earth could match.

The plot thickens—no more doubt as to our going northward. For several days past French steam frigates, blossoming with crimson *kepis*, have been dashing up the Bosphorus,—the old story, our Allies a-head of us, as they were two months back at Gallipoli—and to-day (May 29) the Light Division, under Sir George Brown, really embarks for Varna. This splendid little force consists of two brigades; in the first brigade (Airey's) stand the 7th, 23rd, and 33rd Regiments, in the second (Buller's) are the 19th, 77th, and 88th Regiments, all (with the exception of the 19th, which has to win its modern laurels) being rare old Peninsular corps, sure to give capital accounts of the Muscovite, whenever they close with

Another Highland corps, the 79th, so famous at Gibraltar some years ago for its noble appearance, and splendid mess-room hospitalities, has just come to hand. Like several other regiments, it has been a sufferer from the "volunteering," so recklessly practised of late. The working of this inauspicious scheme may be thus explained. Early in '54 certain corps—the Cameron Highlanders among others—were called on to furnish volunteers to regiments proceeding eastward; a blood-letting, which, of course, seriously impaired the efficiency of the parent battalions, inasmuch as it drained them of their smartest and most enterprising non-commissioned officers and privates. "But," I hear some say, "where's the hardship, plenty of time and opportunity were doubtless afforded these sweated One-ty-One-ths of satisfactorily recruiting up to their old standard." Not so; scarcely had the newly augmented regiments put to sea, before the electric telegraph flashes to the skeletons, just bereft of so much flesh and sinew, these staggering directions. "Prepare for embarkation." Here's a dilemma, time presses, some hundreds of men are required, and, what's more, must be had immediately. Consequently, in the midst of the bustle and confusion inseparable from the situation, the Chatham depôts are applied to, and, by their aid, the wasted companies soon swell up to the old figure. But what a bad bargain has been made! In place of the stout serviceable soldiers, acquainted with the officers, and accustomed to the rules of the "ould rigment" who went away, for the generous purpose of seeing service, you've got a parcel of raw, half-drilled, lads, crimped from the holes and corners of a garrison town. The results of so crude a measure are unmistakeable; the corps which gave, and, indeed, the battalion which received the volunteers, are disjointed; our regimental system is, for a time at least, thrown out of gear; and *esprit-de-corps*, that



mysterious emotion, so refined and ennobling, but yet so sensitive and capricious, is blown to the winds.

MAY 31.—Much ado in the camp. Everywhere spurred, hard-riding A. D. Cs. A constant twittering of orderly bugles, and a prolonged series of "taps," kept divers sergeants and corporals in perpetual motion. In all tents might be observed earnest pipeclaying of belts and elaborate burnishing of accoutrements. "I say, Robinson, wherefore these notes of preparation?" "Know, O, Brown, that at 12 of the clock we turn out for the Sultan's inspection." No wonder, then, Haidar Pacha is astir to-day—no wonder its roads are choked with *arabas*, full of fat, talkative women; that inert Turks and swaggering Circassians, and fierce Bashi-bazouks, in all the splendence of holyday caftans, or tatters, striped and bespotted, cluster, in squatting squads, on every mossy knoll; that Hebrew money-changers clink their purses, and insinuate base coin on credulous "Johnny" more industriously than ever; that Arnaout *seis* (grooms) gallop furiously about, to fascinate our "Winkles" with the speed and handyness of their nags. Who would marvel if Istamboul came out, *en masse*, to cheer its Padishah, prancing in front of the Giaour ranks? No chance of such enthusiasm, however: curiosity and acclamation are not Oriental characteristics.

At the appointed time, the troops, looking their very best, are massed in dazzling columns, and Lord Raglan rides forth from his quarters, attended by his staff. All scarlet and gold, and snowy plumes, are these gentlemen, and high-stepping chargers do they bestride. They are a fine sight. But what has become of the Paynim king? The soldiery, as "standing at ease," (most delusive expression) they liquify under the rays of an almost vertical sun, grumble out, "If this here Sooltan don't coome soon, there wo'ant be much on us left for um to look at."

Hark ! bang, bang, bang, go the arsenal guns at last. "Ten-shon," shout flurried Brigadiers, and for the next five minutes there is an universal dressing of ranks and fixing of bayonets. And now, "present arms," down with the colours—double, double, double beat the thund'ring drums, let bag-pipes squeal and grunt their loudest. Marshal St. Arnaud, Lord Raglan, Lord Stratford, the Royal Duke, are making obeisance ! The Chief of Islam is before us ! Simply dressed in a military-frock, over which hangs a cloak of purple cloth, and, of course, fez-capped, is Abdul Medjid-Khan, a rather slight, pale man of thirty-five years perhaps, a good deal "used up," by indulgence, but yet of a graceful presence. His features are tolerably regular, and, but for a close trimmed, dark-brown beard, might seem effeminate. What you most remark about him are his eyes, large, black, unblenching, they burn like hot coals in the wan face—"seeing everything, observing nothing." Indeed, there is an unearthly fascination about the Commander of the Faithful, in this respect, which would make the fortune of a mesmerist. Apart from that strange glare, worthy of Solymán the Magnificent, or Mahmoud II., you notice only a perfect gentleman, with an expression of face mild and sorrowful, who manages his beautiful Arab with the careless grace peculiar to the Turk.

Just as the Sultan, escorted by a variegated *comitatus* of dapper English staff-officers, smart French *état-major*, and distended Pachas, caracolled along our front, one of those fanatics, so common in the East, rushing from the crowd, followed the proud calvacade with yells of "*giaour Padishah*" (infidel Sultan); still that glowing eyeball never wandered for an instant, not the faintest flush tinged that pallid cheek. Jacks-in-office, however, were not equally indifferent to the taunt. Out of some hidden lair, like bloodhounds, dashed a pair of *kavass*, (police) and

laid hands on the unmannerly patriot, who, foolishly showing fight, was immediately thrown on his back, and dragged away by the heels, still writhing, kicking, and screeching sarcasms. It was in this uneasy posture that the injudicious enthusiast passed from our sight. His subsequent fate remains a mystery, but it is not improbable that he expiated the looseness of his tongue and the fervour of his political prejudices with some months of imprisonment, to which, in the good old times, many a dose of the bastinado would have been super-added ; but that corrective, as well as the relentless bow-string, is but a tradition now-a-days. The Turkish government has grown weak and pitiful—an eunuch despotism—the drivelling phantom of the superb tyranny that, of yore, forced the Christian to tremble at the very gates of Vienna, that made itself respected in the uttermost wilds of Asia and of Africa, that throughout its great dominion punished malversation in high or low, rich or poor, with death, sharp and decisive. There is neither force nor justice now. The patient soldier is openly cheated of his *paras*—the *rayah* is ground to the earth, and, as the natural consequence, the Pacha gets rapidly and inordinately fat with impunity—provided he has friends at court.

This memorable review, then, began and ended to the satisfaction of all concerned (except the pestilent devotee). His Majesty, we were told, being so struck with the magnificence of the display, that he signified to Lord Stratford an intention of one day permitting the Sultanas to witness our evolutions from the latticed windows of the imperial *kiosque* hard by. This intended event in *harem* life never came off, however.

JUNE 10.—The stupendous four-masted steamer, Himalaya, has anchored off Seraglio point. In ten days she has conveyed from England that fine old corps, the 5th Dragoon Guards. A great feat, even for our

matchless mercantile marine. The noble craft is of course the wonder of the hour. Officers board her in crowds, for she has many attractions. Is not her naval architecture a marvel? Is not the excellent skipper reputed hospitable, as well as rich in South-down mutton and Yorkshire hams? Are not the troop-horses splendid animals, hardly the worse for their shaking in the Bay of Biscay? "Away to the Himalaya then! We will examine her lines, we will inspect the Heavies' live stock, and take our chance of being asked to luncheon."

On the 13th of June, there sailed for Varna a glorious band of infantry, but where was its due proportion of cavalry, artillery, engineers? Why were bridge-equipment, baggage-train, ambulance, medical stores, trenching tools, things *in esse*? It really looked as if government were an association of antiquaries, deriving their ideas of modern campaigning from black-letter narratives of the bloody broils, and brainings that passed for war in the days of Hengist and Horsa. How was it, that the Aberdeen cabinet—that *soi-disant* constellation of genius—ignored the history of the last 100 years? What juggling fiend had persuaded the "Peelites" that Russia could be crumpled up like a Hyde Park mob?



## CHAPTER IV.

## VARNA.

Tent-pitching in the dark—On the borders of a lake—Fog *à la Londres*—Glimpses at the town—Tuck up your trowsers, and hold your nose!—Street baptism *à la française*—Thronged thoroughfares—Simple living—"On the very best of terms"—St. Arnaud and Co.—Manners—A French corporal on "our system"—The victuals fall off—Cooks aghast!—Horseplay at night—Hurrah for the chase!—Omar's gift, and what became of it—Troops, Egyptian and Turkish—What, water scarce?—Egyptian drill—A change for the worse—Alas, for Silistria—Deliverance—Advance.

The run up the Bosphorus to the Euxine in fair weather, with the noon-day sun sparkling overhead, unfolds a diorama of surpassing loveliness and interest. But, "soft ye." W.H. Russell, of the "War," has presented the countless readers of the *Times*, with a picture of this unrivalled scene, so vivid in colour, so truthful in detail, that no feeble dabbler in ink should presume to meddle with the subject.

About ten a.m. on the 14th of June, we let go our anchor in the Bay of Varna, usually calm and deserted, but now teeming with "line-of-battle ships, steam frigates, and transports—an array surely such as had never before been seen in those waters. Wherever the eye reached, the flags of England, Turkey, and France were flying merrily, and countless man-o'-war boats rowed briskly about, with orders, or, it may be, counter-orders. In the midst of it all, our regiment seemed, for a time at least, to have been completely forgotten, for it was three p.m. before the



Quarter-Master General's people had made up their minds what to do with us. In consequence of this tardy determination, the left wing of the battalion (the last to leave the ship) fared ill, inasmuch as it was quite dark before the rear companies gained their camping ground; and then, just as the tent-bags were being distributed, down poured the rain; thus, we had to stretch our canvas blindly, in the midst of the black storm, without a chance of choosing a pleasant bit of moss, or a soft-looking stone for our pillows—but there was no help for it. One must adapt oneself to circumstances in this world, take things as they come. So, that night we slept (aye! and well slept) amongst a damp medley of saddle-bags, trunks, and bedding, with a soaking hurley-burley above, and rather glutinous mire below. While the circum-ambient air was charged with smells exceedingly nauseous and subtle, the natural consequences of a previous occupation of the ground by a squadron of Turkish cavalry, whose domestic habits, when in the field, are never peculiarly refined; not that the traduced Mahomedan trooper is an unclean beast, far from it, for his religion forces him to wash whenever water is plenteously comeatable; and to dry rub, when that commodity (as often happens in the East) is very scarce. Nevertheless, these are respects in which he is unquestionably not nice; in other words, his olfactory sensibilities must be singularly blunt and soldier-like.

At day-break next morning (he that leads a nomade life is an early riser) I popped my head out into the open, for the purpose of obtaining a sniff of fresh air, and of forming an idea of the country we inhabited at present. The prospect was by no means inviting, for a regular London fog, clammy, greasy, fetid; (you might almost have cut it with a knife,) enveloped the camp in its noisome shroud. A walk of a hundred yards explained the cause of this ominous murkiness, and awakened fore-

bodings. It turned out, that we had located ourselves "quite convenient" (as Pat says) to a great lake of fresh, but unpotable, water, the squashy edges of which, luxuriantly cropped with rank herbage, smacking of ague and dysentery, rheumatics and diarrhoea, materially marred the desirableness of the neighbourhood, in a residentiary point of view. We now know that Omar Pacha, previous to our landing in Bulgaria, had warned the Allied Generals against the peculiar unhealthiness of the district bordering this very lake ! Why were those warnings disregarded ?

We will now suppose this pea-soup atmosphere to have cleared away sufficiently to allow us to look about.

Varna is built near the mouth of the river Devna, on the eastern extremity of a broad, undulating valley, rich in little else but scrub of the mimosa species. To the north of the town, distant therefrom about three miles, frowns a craggy ridge, swelling to an elevation of 1,000 feet perhaps ; southward, also arise hills, remarkably pleasant to the eye, on account of the blooming forests with which they are clothed. It was on a sunny peak, towering from out these delightful shades, that the Czar pitched his marquee during the siege of Varna in 1828. You will observe, that the sea-board heights of this chain, bending gently inwards, approach the town within 3,000 paces. It is plain, therefore, that, although the place is not absolutely commanded on either side, it cannot be said to dominate over the surrounding ground.\*

The town, which may be about two-and-a-half miles in circumference, is defended by a simple wall, and a deep but narrow ditch. On the land side, there are some ugly advanced redoubts or *tabias*, mounting heavy guns ; within the *enceinte* stands an old Genoese castle, an interesting ruin, but useless in a military sense : such is Varna, which in 1828 defied the Russians, under the Emperor

\* Major-General Macintosh.

Nicholas in person, for a period of ninety days, thirty of which elapsed after a breach had been reported practicable; at last the gates were opened—by treachery. Such is the strategic point on which the Allies were assembling.

To most places "distance lends enchantment to the view," and Varna, especially, should only be seen through a telescope. Once within its walls, every preconceived illusion vanishes, you wade knee-deep in slush, you are nearly knocked over with ineffable stinks; those beautiful minarets which looked so poetic, whilst you paced the transports' deck, can only be approached through a maze of nasty alleys, plentifully supplied with dung-hills and open cess-pools, and infested with droves of mangy curs. The red, yellow, and green paint, the white-wash, the sycamores, the cypresses, that lately glanced so cheerily in the sunshine, turn out, on closer acquaintance, to be the flimsy disguises of tottering, bulging, rat-eaten rottenness.

At this time, military law and military licence had entire possession of the place (the inhabitants of the better sort, and a large majority of the Mussulman women had prudently betaken themselves off), and the French sappers were busy painting up Parisian names at the corners of the streets, and christening with Parisian designations every official building. This twisting lane, the sign-board informs us, is now the "*Rue des Victoires*;" that crazy, shabby-genteel house proclaims itself "*Poste aux lettres*;" here, we perceive, are the head-quarters of *M. le Maréchal*; close by, stands the "*Bureau d'Etat Major*." Now this is an excellent plan, which we ought to have adopted in our quarter of the town, but as no Peninsular precedent for such a proceeding could be discovered, our authorities, of course, declined the responsibilities of the paint-pot; accordingly, the British establishments remained untitled and undistinguished. But what matters a little trouble, or disorder, so long as you can ward off the bugbear innovation!



At first the bazaar was completely in the hands of Greeks and Armenians, arrant rogues, on whom (will political economists forgive the heterodox remark ?) *maximum* might have been imposed with advantage to the public ; however, the opening of a few French stores, where most of the necessities, and many of the luxuries of this world, were to be had at fair rates, soon put a legitimate stopper on extortion. Perhaps, the most popular of the commercial exotics was in the form of a modest, but really comfortable *restaurant*, *Café des Allies*, by name, a savoury oasis in the hungry, thirsty, dusty, desert. What a trade it did drive in dubious *bif-sticks*, and an ambiguous effervescence, set down as Champagne in the *carte* ! Why were our men of business so backward in coming to turn an honest penny amongst us ? It is unusual for English merchants to lag behind, when money is ready to fly.

To the uninitiated, the narrow thoroughfares seemed in a state of chronic strangulation. Strings of sumpter-beasts, *arabas* (most unmanageable vehicles), artillery tumbrils, French *équipages militaires*, tattered, war-beaten Turkish and Egyptian battalions, squadrons of swarthy Osmanli lancers, *pelotons* of *Gens d'armes*, were jumbled in an excruciating, maddening medley. And then, to heighten "the confusion and amaze," (if that were possible) gangs of fraternizing allies, all more or less fuddled, and proportionably affectionate—Zouaves, Highlanders, Grenadiers, and *Chasseurs*—*Indigènes* rolled about, trolling patriotic songs, and kicking viciously at every harmless "Bono Johnny" who chanced to cross their path.

The military duties of this delightful Bulgarian capital were divided between a French brigade, and two or three Turkish regiments under the orders of the Pasha, who nominally administered the government of the place. The mass of St. Arnaud's forces occupied the hills, about three

miles to the south, while the British camped on a slimy flat, nearly three quarters of a mile from the (Schumla) gate. Sir George Brown and the light division were pushed ten miles to the front.

Our tented field exhibited none of the neatness which had been apparent at Haidar Pacha, all the Smyrna carpets and gay frippery, picked up in the bazaar, having been left in store at Scutari ; in truth, our present domestic arrangements were on a scale of rough simplicity that would have won the approbation of the late Sir Charles James Napier, that brilliant soldier, whose death is *now* mourned by Englishmen as a national loss.

Between the French and ourselves the best fellowship existed. Every where in the two camps, you observed the British lion and the Gallic cock—I beg pardon, eagle—warmly shaking hands, and by signs inviting a recourse to the deep booze, which, with northern people, would seem to be an essential preliminary of friendship. Of all our intimacies, the most remarkable was the love at first sight which glowed in the bosoms of *Zou-Zou* and Highlandman. Charmed, most like, by one another's singular and attractive costume, honouring one another's glorious antecedents, these *corps d'élite* became inseparable—Pylades and Orestes of the Anglo-French.

Marshal St. Arnaud often visited our lines. His cavalcade was striking. In front rode a dozen Arab cavaliers, all chosen warriors, gaunt and hawk-eyed, clad in crimson *bourous*, and armed with towering spears, together with yatagans and pistols in plenty. Then came the Marshal, thin, and very haggard, but a soldier every inch, supported on either side by that lion in the fray, the gentle, long-haired Canrobert, spectacles on nose ; by Bosquet, stout and stern ; and by fat, good humoured Prince Napoleon, outwardly a coarsely executed copy of his incomparable uncle. The rear was brought up by a section of *Chasseurs*

*d'Afrique*: alike at home in the pigskin, or on foot are these adroit troopers. The *carabine* of the *voltigeur*, and the sabre of the hussar are one to them.\*

On such occasions, the English soldiers always turned out of their tents, and cheered the French Generals, who, evidently pleased and flattered, responded to the hearty hurrahs, with gracious smiles and doffing of laced hats. Seeing the excellent effect of this noble cordiality, one could not avoid wishing some of our own chiefs had been less chary of their presence, and not quite so stiff in their bearing, when they did appear among the troops. "O," but it is sometimes said, "our privates don't care for that sort of thing." Really! why, then, are Sir De Lacy Evans and Sir Colin Campbell so cherished by their men? May it not be, because, apart from their undeniable professional value, they have ever as kind a word, and as beaming 'a countenance for the Pats and Sandies on sentry, as for a Royal Duke.

Now, that we have made out the character of the British soldier; now that we know him by the surest of tests—battle and privation—to be intelligent as he is brave, high-hearted as he is long suffering; now, that we have discovered within him aspirations superior to "beer and bacca," we must cut really the old school with all its cliques and prejudices, obstructiveness, and "common-fellow-ism."

During their frequent visits to our camp, I had many opportunities of asking the French soldiers what they thought of our knapsacks, accoutrements, and so forth, but one always got the same answer—"O mon Dieu, très lourd." One day a keen-witted young corporal of *Chasseurs de Vincennes* told me, "he believed the troops of his nation

\* "Two elements are united in the cavalry of Africa to ensure success. The French element, and the Arab element, the Spahi, and the Chasseur."—Count de Castellane.



were formerly half-smothered in harness somewhat similar to what the English wore at present, but Napoleon had swept away *tous les restes militaires du moyen age*." He then proceeded to narrate, how he had been informed that British officers bought and sold their *grades*, and that the *simple soldat* rarely rose to be *sous-lieutenant* even, but, for his part, he would not credit such preposterous stories.

Shortly after our occupation of the country round Varna, a marked deterioration took place in the rations of fresh meat and bread; the former daily becoming thinner, dryer, and tougher, the latter being often sour, and, to many stomachs, unwholesome. It was reported, (not untruthfully, I fear,) that the commissariat had entered into contracts with mere Pera jobbers—Armenian tailors, Jew dragomans, and the like—who were quite incapable of fulfilling such extended engagements in a satisfactory manner, although several highly respectable firms had sent in tenders! When shall we be rid of this penny-wise, pound-foolish system of ours? Why is routine so wedded to the lowest figure, so enamoured of the cheap and nasty?

Being on the food question, I must mention a little episode affecting the *cuisine*. Our regimental cooks had dug their simple kitchens out of the sides of some tumuli bordering the Schumla road. The site was convenient on account of proximity to the hungry, and the shelter from wind and dust which its peculiar configuration afforded to the *artistes*. But an unpleasant objection soon came to light. After awhile, the fires reached the hidden materials of which these artificial hillocks had been constructed; thereupon, a sickening odour—the soap-boiling of Bermondsey a joke to it—burst forth, upsetting the rudest appetites among ourselves, and even forcing the tough-nosed Bulgarian peasants, passing that way, into fits of hawking and expectoration dreadful to witness. No won-

der there's a stench—no wonder the camp is all qualms and megrims! Who'd have thought it? We had been inadvertently grilling the bones of the Russians that died before Varna in 1828. Abominable burnt sacrifice!

A few days after our landing, the horses and mules, purchased at Constantinople, joined us, and, when picketted in column on the right flank of the camp, gave the division a locomotive air, to which, in reality, it could lay little claim. Until we became accustomed to the open-mouthed habits of our nags, this side-by-side connection with them was anything but agreeable. Woe to light sleepers, whose delicate susceptibilities no rough campaigning usages had blunted as yet, for throughout the dreary night there was an everlasting Dutch concert of snortings, neighings, winnowings, squealings, from time to time diversified by the more practical misdemeanours of some intemperate little stallion or graceless mule, that, breaking away from his hobbles, would scamper among the tents, tearing up the pegs, snapping the ropes, and, ever and anon, bringing down the frail tenement bodily about the ears of its occupant, whose maledictions, as he is dragged, by a file of the nearest guard, from beneath the heap of canvass, draw (after the manner of this world) ridicule, rather than pity, from the luckier neighbour whose dwelling has escaped collapse; and why not? What, after all, are such annoyances to healthy men but legitimate jokes and laughter? The fever patients, tossing on the hard ground in yonder hospital-marquee, should monopolize our commiseration; they, truly, are on the rack, with this hubbub, this larum without ceasing.

We were delighted to find "baggage" both cheap and plentiful at our new quarters. For £3. I bought, without any cheapening, too, an excellent pony, which in the Constantinople market would have fetched £9. at least. The opportunity of increasing their studs was not neglected by



the infantry officers—proverbial for love of horse-flesh—for, in addition to the pleasures of galloping about the country, visiting the French, and riding into Varna (for the sake of being fleeced in its bazaars,) a fresh excitement had been scented. In our neighbourhood existed materials for the chase. What, foxes? Not quite. Numbers of gaunt curs—scavengers of the East, driven out of Varna by Christian intolerance—had taken to the open country, snoozing all day in the stunted brushwood, and at night prowling through the camp in quest of garbage. Transient, however, was their well-fed ease—certain injudicious snuffs about tents containing a cherished ham or a newly-opened pot of preserved “hotch-potch,” roused the suspicions of a relentless foe, and a war of extirmination began. The “meet” is fixed, and all ranks and ages, from the grizzled Colonel to the smooth-faced “sub,” come mounted on palfreys of every breed, size, and nation. The English hunter, the fiery but docile Arab, the Bulgarian “punch,” the Maltese sumpter-mule, even, are there. And now, like a fan, spreads o’er the plain this jocund gathering of younger sons and Tipperary squiredom; carefully beat are the likely covers, and away;—the field is furiously careering, with all degrees of pace, and every eccentric variety of seat, at the tail of a lank, wolf-like yelper. The spree is red-hot. Never, as more than one cunning fox-hunter owned, were view-hollows given with a blyther ring. Seldom has the Kilkenny pack, during its liveliest seasons, afforded excitement more obstreperous, than did this devil-take-the hindmost dog murder. The pace is too killing by half; neither game nor horse can stand it. After five minutes’ run, therefore, the luckless mongrel, regularly ridden down, succumbs to the “colts” of Fitzmyth, of the “Heavies,” or Barny Mulligan, of the 100th. But the day’s sport is not over yet,—the horses are allowed to breathe for half-an-hour, and then fresh prey is started. As long as the

"tits" have any go left in them, that whipping, spurring, scouring massacre goes on ! The fun of this rude *chasse* was not, I think, entered into by the French officers. They never did likewise, although the nobler wolf lurked around the outskirts of their camp, committing, in the night time, sad depredations in the larders of the *Vivandières*. It must not be supposed, however, that the greedy spoiler was allowed to live at free quarters among our allies. No,—the Zouaves, setting to work after their "thorough" fashion, gave quite as satisfactory an account of the brute as our more orthodox sport-craft could have done.

Riding one evening in the French *quartier* of Varna, (pretty extensive was that *quartier*, by-the-bye) I came upon a large square, almost blocked up with *arabas* and draught oxen, while, in a remote corner, appeared a mass of several hundred Bulgarian peasants, squatting huddled together on the ground, under the lynx-eyed watch of four little red-breeched sentries. A *sous-intendant* chancing to pass by at the time, gave me, very politely, an interpretation of the scene. "The *arabas*, oxen, and men, you see here, have been sent to us by Omar Pacha, for our commissariat purposes ; we are obliged to put a guard over the waggoners, because the poor devils would certainly desert if left to themselves." Good. Continuing my ride, I fell in with a friend, from whom I inquired, (after relating what had just come under my notice) whether the Turkish General had supplied us likewise with transport. "Oh, yes," was the reply, "Omar divided all his cavalry could squeeze together of this sort of thing, between the French and ourselves ; but our share has dwindled to near nothing, in consequence of our omitting to clap a guard over the drivers." Somehow it did not strike old—, till too late, that these fellows were likely to "make themselves scarce."

It never struck us that these miserable men (philorussian to the back-bone, being of the Greek persuasion) could have the bad taste to prefer the society of their wives and children, from whose arms the Moslem had lately torn them, to our hard service! Artless simplicity however amiable in private life, is extremely inconvenient in war.

As the camp abutted on the Schumla road, we suffered not a little from dust, which, in these arid regions, is beyond a joke; however, this disadvantage was compensated by the animation of the locality—the constant passing to and fro of outlandish traffic, of horsemen and of footmen of the most distant nations and in the strangest costumes. What perhaps amused us most was the occasional sight of an Egyptian battalion marching by on its way to drill. The rub-a-dub of the impish drummers, and the discordant wails of the uncultivated buglers rarely failed to bring every red-coat out of his tent. The ragged regiment, about 800 strong, approaches in column of companies with the colonel—usually a fat unwieldy fellow with shoes down at heel, long narrow straps, and dirty cotton stockings—riding *en tête* with an air of good-humoured self-sufficiency. The “rank and file” present interesting specimens of the diverse populations ruled by Sâid. There are privates fairer in the cheek than ourselves, there are sergeants black as Uncle Tom, and *vice versa*. The Horse Guards of Alexandria, it would seem, exempts from military service neither tender youth nor grey hairs, for here, we have a lad of sixteen, at the outside, “covered” by a wizened old chap bordering on three-score. In the land of ophthalmia, the loss of an eye must not incapacitate the patriotic Mussulman from bleeding *pro aris et foris*, hence, one-third of this corps is cyclopean. The soldiers are dressed in the hideous semi-European uniform, at present the regulation of the Otto-



man empire, consisting of a *tarbousch*, or red fez cap, *minus* its useful and elegant appendage, the turban, shapeless jacket and trowsers made of a kind of blue drugget, rather inferior in quality to the spongy serge in which our line are clad. Nothing could well be more dilapidated than the accoutrements, or clumsier than the old flint firelocks; we remarked, however, that the rude muskets were kept in beautiful order, every brightly burnished lock being tenderly bandaged in greased rags, to preserve it from wet, &c. By-the-bye, this is a dodge we would have done wisely had we imitated. Although far from what parade tacticians would call "a fine regiment," there was a wiry, weather-hardened, workmanlike look about the Egyptian Legion, which should gain for it the respect of true soldiers, even supposing it had not won its spurs by bold service and manful sufferings on the Danube. If one were inclined to be censorious, fault doubtless might be found with the officers generally. Fat, flabby, and *fainéant*, they had every appearance of having mistaken their profession—an error of judgment from which even English youths are not always exempt.

Physically the Turkish troops are very superior to their Egyptian comrades, but in the way of arms, appointments, clothing, and officers, there is little to choose between them. Both can manœuvre in no discreditable manner, and, being brave, hardy, and temperate, have shown themselves, under good command, to be capable of great enterprises.

In the rear of an Ottoman regiment, you will always perceive four pack-horses laden with enormous leathern receptacles for water. This proof positive of the scarcity on service of that vital commodity, led our commissariat into a compliance with oriental experience. The waterskins were bought, horses were procured to convey them, but, somehow, or other, the fluid seldom turned up (or out

rather) in the hour of need. Perhaps at this stage of proceedings no one could altogether bring himself to realize circumstances, in which a draught of cold water would be agreeable to the British soldier. A forty years' peace had blotted out all recollection of war, its agonies, and its wants.

On one occasion, I devoted some time to attendance at an Egyptian brigade field-day. For a whole hour, the men worked away without "standing at ease" for a minute, despite a broiling sun and the heavy burthens they carried. Their formation of columns, deployment into line, and file-firing were far from contemptible displays. At last, the brigadier allowed a general "falling out;" arms were piled; the soldiers betook themselves either to praying or to smoking, while the superior officers dismounted, and disposing their ample and exuding proportions upon carpets spread for their reception, regaled themselves with pipes and coffee served by Nubian *chiboukji*.

One cannot help deploring the mistake which the able Sultan Mahmoud committed in meddling with the ancient military costume of his people. Not many years ago, the *Nizam-Djedid*—a species of young guard organized by Sultan Selim as a counterpoise to the Janissaries—wore an uniform almost identical with that beautiful and martial apparel which makes the *zou-zous* (as the fond *grisettes* and *lorettes* of Paris call the Zouaves) the most picturesque troops in the world. Thus, no sooner had the fatuous Osmanli squeezed himself into a mean burlesque of Russo-Prussian regimentals, than the French (admirable judges of such matters) adopted his leavings. Nor are we, ourselves, much wiser than the Turk as concerns the clothing question; do we not persist in attiring our black troops of the East and West Indies after a fashion ingeniously unsuitable to the climate, and not a little odious to nigger prejudices?

Our men were now fast losing the firm, healthful aspect, which had so distinguished them at Scutari. Fever prevailed, ague had shown itself, diarrhoea was pretty general: results by no means surprising, when the unwholesome site of the camp, the increasing inferiority of the rations, the excessive heats, and the melancholy-breeding inaction, are taken into consideration, but unhappily, the connection between cause and effect, seemed, in many instances, to have been altogether lost sight of by the higher powers—too inexperienced to anticipate, too sanguine to apprehend.

Since our coming to Varna every ardent thought had turned toward Silistria, still, with noblest resolution, struggling against an overwhelming foe. "When are we to go to the relief?" was the ever-repeated inquiry. But days, weeks, sped by, without symptoms of a stir, and at length, the humiliating fact broke upon us, that the army was immoveable, and therefore, this important fortress, with Butler, Nasmyth, Moussa Pacha, and the heroic garrison must be left to their fate; yet we lay but sixty miles away, and could sometimes hear the booming of the heavy guns! What cutting anathemas pursued the commissariat, as if that department were alone to blame.

Without presuming to defend Mr. Filder and his subordinates from the strictures which have assailed their administration, I may observe that those gentlemen, for the most part clever and very active public servants, stood, from the first, in a position of considerable difficulty. Indeed, far from nestling in "the bosom of the Commander-in-Chief," (their proper place, according to Sir Charles Trevelyan) they do not appear to have been favoured, either in Bulgaria, or in the Crimea, with any large amount of head-quarter countenance and support. The time may come, when the nation shall confess



that the commissariat, did not play the chief rôle in an awful tragedy of errors.

To resume. All hope of Silistria's salvation was given up ; and, with mingled feelings of shame and indignation, we expected to hear of its capture from hour to hour. Conceive then the delightful surprise of all ranks, when, on Sunday, June 25th, immediately after divine service, the Duke of Cambridge informed the first division, how a *Tatar* (courier) had just communicated to Lord Raglan the wonderful tidings, that the Russians, after destroying their own saps and parallels before the place, had, on a sudden, raised the siege, and recrossed the Danube. Paskiewitch, it turned out, apprehensive of the proximity of the allies (he knew not their immobility), had strained every nerve in a final furious burst upon the *tabias* (out-works) defending the town. That burst was beaten back with terrific carnage: wherefore the old Muscovite marshal decamped.\*

In the midst of our exultation there was cause for bitterest tears. Butler,—foremost of a soldier race,—had fallen, Moussa Pacha had fallen, Nasmyth alone survived to receive England's gratitude ; and brilliant has been the reward bestowed on the young hero. Valour, sagacity, unflinching firmness, intelligence, replete with resource, have actually gained him an unattached majority ! Had Charles Nasmyth been born a Frenchman, he would have commanded a brigade, by this time.

\* Three times has Silistria fought stoutly. The Russians invested it July 21, 1828, but were compelled to abandon the siege October 25th of the same year. On the 17th of May, 1829, they re-appeared before its devoted walls, and entered the place by capitulation on the 1st of July following. May not Silistria claim a page in history beside Gerona and Saragossa ?

About a week after the news of this great deliverance, Lord Raglan decided on taking a pace to the front. To this end, the light division, under Sir George Brown, broke up from Aladyn, and advanced to Devno, where the bulk of the cavalry and artillery were already; the first division, under the orders of H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, taking possession of the vacated ground at Aladyn.



## CHAPTER V.

## A WHITED SEPULCHRE.

Stumbling on the threshold—Spirit of the private soldier—"Pluck" to the back bone—All is not gold that glitters—The hectic flush—Kindness, the best policy—Barclay, Perkins and Co., in the jungle—Order of the day—Drill at blood heat—Hurrah! for the press—Foraging—Hair—"To be or not to be."—Esau triumphant—Omar Pacha and Skender Bey—"Here's a health, &c."—Lord Cardigan's ride to the Danube—Rewards prepaid—Quick promotion—Ruins: of what?—Booth building—Recruits—What are we going to do?—The Destroying Angel.

At three a.m., Saturday, July 1st, a note of preparation sounds through the camp, down come the tents, and the loading of baggagers is begun. In the meanwhile, the bagpipes shriek the advance, and away marches the royal Duke's division, with the old Black Watch (forty-twa's) in front, leaving the luggage train to follow, whenever its arrangements were completed. It soon became manifest that the rear-guard was anything but a sinecure. Here we stand, a handful of crude campaigners, attempting to get really upon our legs for the first time. In front of us is chaos—the field strewn with tent bags and black boxes, cases of Cognac, and hampers of "Bass," a mountain of pack saddles, and, last but not least, a herd of beasts of burthen, generally evincing very perverse dispositions.

No ways daunted, our excellent fellows set to work with a zeal and good will, which ought to have smoothed

away every obstacle. Saddles were girthed and regirthed ; loads all shapes and sizes, were packed and repacked with untiring assiduity ; nevertheless, miscarriages seemed endless. We were almost led to fear our painstaking might prove as ineffectual as the labour of the unprincipled daughters of Danaüs. But as time, temper, and perseverance will see man through most earthly troubles, the train by slow, very slow, degrees, assumed a trim which promised a start ; however, cause of delay still remained. A fractious palfrey—a right pretty fellow—obstinately refused the “utility part” of company’s pack-horse ; over and over again had his complement of burden (five damp tents, with their poles, pegs, &c.) been, as we supposed, securely corded upon his back, and, as often, had the nimble rogue by a cunning combination of kicks, flings, and winces, sent the bags flying. “Hang it, something must be done, or we shall be kept here till dark,” was the talk on all sides ; and now it occurred to me, that if we could manage to squeeze some of the supererogatory “pluck” out of the fiery little chap, we might still get our will of him. I therefore requested a six-foot private to try the effects of a gallop. No sooner said than done ; up jumps Hodge, nothing loth, and away bounds the demon courser. Round and round what but now was the tented field, he tears ; the jockey, with shirt sleeves bellying in the breeze, sticks close, hand and heel going all the while. The soldiers, enjoying the fun, roar, “Well done Tummas, gee-up poney !” And are at issue as to which deserves the most applause, their comrade’s horsemanship, or the mettlesome stride of “Johnny Turk.” But soon the race begins to flag, and Tummas pulls up by command, his beefy person exhaling almost as profusely as did his gallant steed, which steaming, panting, resigned, stands before us a water colour copy of his former vigorous, frantic self. Again, we pile the tent bags upon the

devoted hack ; this time the operation is successful ; having found a master, our insubordinate helot bows to his fate ; (from his beauty and breeding he merited a better one) takes his place in the rank with submission, and subsequently turned out the most useful animal of the batch.

The train moves on, and in rear follows the guard, which is ordered to repair every disaster, and on no account to allow "luggage to be left behind."

We had barely journeyed half a mile, before it was proved to us how know-nothing we were in the muleteer's art, what infants in the science of packing for active service ! Most humiliating confession !—the road was getting cumbered with various domestic constituents of the defunct camp. Here, we have an Irish *bât-man*, full of oaths, cholera, and pater-nosters, calling on the saints for aid, while his master's property lies neglected in the mud, and the quondam porter trots off in the distance. There, in the very middle of the way, a mule is determinately rolling amongst a heap of trunks, baskets, and bedding ; in another place, a poor galled brute has irretrievably broken down, and it is a chance whether his lading of sherry and pale ale ever reach the proprietor. Nevertheless, by dint of a judicious admixture of coaxing and cudgelling, unintermitting vigilance, and continual picking up of pieces, on the part of the soldiers, the wire-drawn caravan (it was now about five miles in length) was kept slowly going.

But how was it that that cheery, light company guard marched along in such high spirits?—how was it that broiling heat and suffocating dust made no impression, seemingly, on the stockless, unbuttoned sharp-shooters ? Because, (according to a report prevalent in the ranks,) we were now actually *en route* for the Danube, "to take a turn at the Rooshians," and thereby qualify ourselves for a medal. Fighting and clasps were the sole topics of con-

versation ; and yet, there are people who would insinuate that military honour is not understood by the private soldier—that it is a caste monopoly, forsooth, the prerogative of titles and broad acres, of purple and fine linen. Out upon it !

The greater part of our road lay across a sterile plain, scantily clothed with burnt-up herbage and sickly mimosa shrubs ; but, a short distance ahead, rose a low range of hills, crowned with brightest verdure ; and about three miles away, on our right hand, basked sweet pastoral lawns, sprinkled with white-washed cottages—an illusory land of Canaan, promising milk and honey to the eye, but (as far as concerned ourselves) giving neither to the belly. Not till 6 p.m., did the last sumpter-mule, and the foot-sore, half-famished Guard reach the new camp. Several of the men were woefully exhausted, but, buoyed up by inherent “pluck,” and spurred by the example of more muscular comrades, would not give in—no, they would die first. That night the mess of salt pork was very refreshing, the soft turf unusually inviting.

A lovelier spot than Aladyn cannot be imagined ; there, hill and dale, wood and water, blend into a delicious picture. But that light and shade, verdure and pellucid lake are as *rouge* and pearl powder on a lady’s cheek—“springs to catch woodcocks,” snares for the unwary. Yes, this seventh heaven of the artist is but the mahogany coffin, bedizened with brass nails and gilded hinges. The unwholesomeness of the place, one would think, might have been read by a hard runner. Were not the tents jammed closely together in a tangled coppice, with all manner of vegetable matter decaying around ? Did not matted foliage hinder the faint summer breeze from wafting its gladdening tonic towards us ? Was it not true that few mornings passed without a yellow, fleecy fog emerging from the steaming lake hard by, and hanging, like a great



damp sheet, about us for hours? Furthermore, who was it that selected Aladyn ("Faith in God," is the interpretation of the word; what a suggestive title!) for soldiers' abiding place? Why was the camp so long continued there, despite the dictates of common sense (faculty most rare) and the warnings of the natives? *Non mi ricordo*, officialism replies.

Distant about half a mile from this scene of pestilential beauty was a deserted village, charmingly situated amid groves of walnut and mulberry. Here it was we first came face to face with the wretchedness that waits on the march of armies. Not a living thing stirred in that once peaceful hamlet; an entire community had been driven forth by the ruffianism of a few blackguards, belonging to the division which had preceded us. Outrages, as stupid and impolitic as they were brutal and cowardly, for that gross savagery, to a dozen Bulgarian families, spreading like wildfire among a hesitating population, turned at once the scale against us, and filled the land, from the Balkan to the Danube, with distrust and hatred of the red uniform; and diligent, we may be sure, were the Greek "popes," (priests)—Russian spies to a man—in inflaming the antipathy. For some time, even money seemed to have lost its adductive power with the suspicious peasantry; for example, when you entered a village, women and children fled from before your face, responding to your beseeching for *yoormootah* (eggs) with the inhospitable screech *yok, yok*, (no, no,) despite the insidious chink of your sixpenny pieces.

At length, political economy re-asserted its sway; love of gain and assurances of protection induced a few enterprising rustics to bring fowls, milk, and vegetables to our lines. This desultory huckstering, Colonel Gordon Drummond, of the Guards, took in hand; he fostered it, he guided its first tottering steps, and, in the fulness of time,

had the gratification of seeing it expand into the semblance of a regular bazaar. As the gallant Coldstreamer's persevering tact mainly set the rickety bantling on its legs, so did his solicitude sustain the progress of the nervous adult. Had it been left to itself, this commercial institution would have been as an exhalation of the morning ; it could not have survived a week. Never was Stock Exchange more sensitive than that rude poultry-market, a few casual "god-damns," delivered with the force and unction characteristic of the English soldier, being enough to scare half the farmers for days to come. Albeit, Bulgarian susceptibility had its uses, it taught the necessity of toning down the asperities of our John Bull manner, and the advantage of having recourse, in all transactions with the awe-stricken boors, to that almost omnipotent spell—soft sawder. Moral lessons which, being wound up in the great dinner question, were not altogether thrown away.

We had not been long settled at Aladyn before the few casks of porter that remained over and above the Scutari and Varna consumption of that beverage, were forwarded to us, greatly to the joy of the Guards, who, from old associations, exceedingly affected the inflating "brew" of Barclay and Perkins. Is "heavy-wet" quite suitable to a very hot climate? Can it be wholesome for men more or less suffering from diarrhoea and billiary complaints? In spite of the recorded opinion of a General who has gone so far as to ascribe the subsequent sickness of the Foot Guards to deprivation of their favorite swizzle, there are persons inclined to answer in the negative, and to argue in favour of the campaigning superiority of the rum-keg. But, even supposing XX "stout" to be the most health-giving nectar the British soldier can imbibe, will not its bulk and waste exclude it from the commissariat stores of an army in the field? If you have any doubt about giving an

affirmative here, just imagine a "land transport train" with its "40,000 horses."

Our day may be said to have been divided into three portions ; the first, being devoted to drill and exhaustion ; the second, to torpor and tobacco ; the third—and most agreeable—to foraging and feeding. Experience has proved that in this peculiar climate, field-days and parades should uniformly have been *over* by eight o'clock a.m. For this reason: between half-past seven a.m., and ten a.m., are perhaps the most sultry hours of the twenty-four ; during that short interval the young sun has it all his own way, untempered with the light breeze which usually springs up later. Unfortunately these considerations were, in some quarters, deemed unimportant ; a little heat, more or less, being pooh-poohed by certain inexperienced *mounted* officers ; consequently, the men on foot suffered greatly. It was a sorry sight to see tall fellows fainting on parade, like school-girls.\*

No sooner were the troops dismissed after a tactical essay, (according to Phoenix Park principles), than there pealed out an universal cry for breakfast, which, having been discussed with appetites, in most instances the reverse of vigorous, the military commonwealth "off duty" would lapse into a state of semi-coma ; would, for the most part, compose itself to the enjoyment of a *siesta* in tents hot as ovens ; the thin canvas of course offering but

\* Among the Divisional Orders of the Earl of Lucan, I find the following admirable memorandum :—

"Varna, 21st July, 1854.

"Officers commanding brigades and corps in the cavalry division are desired to be most particular, that no parade or drill is allowed to *continue* after eight o'clock, a.m. It is to be observed, that the troops are to be *already* in camp, and *dismissed* by that hour."

By order,

(Signed) W. PAULET, Col. A.A.G.

feeble resistance to the blaze overhead. Take a stroll through the camp, and you will find the majority of the Anakim, overcome with heat and idleness, stretched flat and snoring upon the ground; while a small scattered minority of livelier temperaments regale themselves with some greasy jewel of a French novel, or, more precious acquisition, a newspaper. Oh, who can describe the eagerness with which a copy of the "Thunderer" was clutched, who can tell, in adequate language, the torments those well-thumbed columns have solaced, the fears they have dispelled, the doubts they have cleared away, the new-born hopes they have inspired? The *Illustrated London News*—thanks to Mr. Crowe's vivid sketches, which gave it a local interest—was probably second favourite; although the sturdy *Daily News*, the piquant *Examiner*, the *United Service Gazette*, and that facetious philosopher *Mr. Punch*, had severally many admirers, both high and low.

And now, about three p.m., horses are brought round, and away ride the officers, dispersing themselves like *sotnias* of Cossacks over the face of the land. It is in search of cabbages, and chickens, eggs, and sucking pigs, that the red-shirted, wide-a-wake'd Hotspurs are pricking so swiftly. Towards six p.m.—the dinner hour in most companies—the foragers begin to drop in, some, pretty heavily laden with good things; others, with haversacs altogether empty. As one man will live, where another starves, so would Ensign Jones pick up "grub," where unobservant Lieutenant Robinson saw naught but dust and ashes: a pleasant voice, a good eye for country, and a knowing way of rattling *piastres* rarely failed of success—after the establishment of the Drummond Bazaar.

From the Proclamation of War until now, an uninterrupted, and, occasionally, acrimonious controversy had been waged between two or three old generals, and the majority of regimental officers, concerning "dress" and the "*mous-*



*tache.*" The innocent modifications, which a nomadic life, a broiling sun, and the leaning of the military Englishman towards novelty—sometimes perhaps extravagance—in apparel, had introduced into our mesquin and unpopular regimentals, were themes for unintermitting animadversion. These little ebullitions of prejudice, however, were as parental chidings compared with the vials of wrath, which were poured from on high on the dawning tendency of the lower ranks to cultivate the symbol of manhood. One would think some mysterious peril, some loathsome plague, lurked amid the fuzzy curls of this said beard, so rancorously did an ancient commander or two do battle against the down for ever struggling to be dark or to be foxy on ten thousand chins. At length, the question—a slight one, it doubtless seems to country squires, whose razors are perpetually keen, and whose jug of shaving-water stands conveniently at hand—assumed a serious aspect. Facial abrasions (which, although, the simple effects of bad barbering may be dangerous in certain conditions of food, health, and climate) were becoming prevalent. The doctors began to remonstrate, so the martinets took fright, and a brigadier (who had all along been especially conspicuous for tonsorial fanaticism), suggested this grim-faced compromise, that hair should be permitted to grow on the poor lacerated lips, provided it were clipped close with scissors at the end of every week! It was not to be expected that the hair question would be settled by so unsightly a splitting of the difference. The dispute therefore waxed warmer, and warmer, till the Minister of War—like a sensible man—broke up the agitation by issuing an order to the effect, that officers and soldiers might henceforth consult their own tastes with regard to the preservation or extirpation of whiskers and moustachios. Thus did the beard triumph! thus it was

that the army, from being a band of shavelings, gradually assumed the grisly presence of a host of Esaus.

JULY 6.—The division paraded betimes for the inspection of Omar Pacha, who was returning to Schumla from Varna, where he had been spending a few days in consultation with the Allied Generals. The day was propitious, and the battalions looked glorious "with bright emblazonry and horrent arms," as the Ottoman Chief rode down the line accompanied by Marshal St. Arnaud (ever in the saddle, notwithstanding an agonizing disease) and Lord Raglan. Omar, mounted on a beautiful grey Arab, was, of course, "the observed of all observers." He is a wiry active man of about the middle height, with a beard and moustache plenteously grizzled, although his years can hardly be more than fifty. His forehead is high, broad, and stern, his grey eyes deep-set, bright, and penetrating, with a twinkle of humour in their fire; his features are massive and irregular, but with valour, resolve, quickness of apprehension speaking in every rugged line and furrow. Take him for all in all, this renegade has the look of a man fit to defend an empire. Omar wore the ever recurring fez, and his neat, well-made blue uniform might challenge comparison with the faultless *tenue* of the French Marshal. But who is that striking personage in the *Sirdar's suite*—the Cavalier with the countenance of a lion—that comes in for so large a share of notice? 'Tis the noble Illyrian, Skender Bey, the Murat of the Turkish army.\*

As the cavalcade passed our front, the wide difference between the escorts of the three Generals was very remarkable, St. Arnaud was followed by his myrmidons, the crimson mantled Bedouins. In the rear of Lord Raglan curvetted a party of the 11th Hussars—spruce and spotless, as if on palace duty, while at the Moslem's back came a body guard of some twenty spearmen, swart stout fellows,

\* Count Illinski, a soldier of fifty battles.

in rags and tatters, bestriding shaggy nags, as active and rough and ready as themselves. There were those among us who scoffingly contrasted these soiled, blood-stained troopers with our own dapper, cherry-breeched dragoons; little did such critics guess that, a few months hence, there would be nothing to choose between Turk and Briton on the score of good looks and raiment—war is no respecter of persons.

Omar Pacha was evidently struck with the imposing bearing of the division in general, but to the Highlanders his admiration seemed most pointedly directed. On nearing them, his hard face brightened into a pleasant smile, and he reined in his charger, the better to examine the plaided warriors. At the conclusion of the review, the Duke of Cambridge proposed three cheers for the Marshal and the *Sirdar*, a suggestion which was responded to in good English earnest, to the obvious gratification of the generals concerned. And now to your tents and breakfasts, O Scots and Guardsmen, after a fine morning's work, the fatigue and heat of which had been almost forgotten in the unwonted interest of the occasion.

We had just commenced our morning meal of tea and sour bread,\* when loud and oft repeated shouts, from the mens' quarter, caused every officer to scramble upon his legs—owing to the impossibility of carrying about chairs or stools, the Turkish custom of squatting cross-legged on the earth had been universally adopted—and sally forth to see the fun. We were just in time, for there *salaam-*ing right and left, in the midst of the delighted privates, were great Omar Pacha and Skender Bey, who had trotted over to Aladyn, to have another look at the "big

\* The bread served out to the English troops when in Bulgaria, was in all respects (except cost, wherein it had considerably the advantage, I believe) inferior to the wholesome article issued to the French.



men," and the *sans culottes*. Could these doughty chiefs have understood half the complimentary remarks made on all sides about themselves, their pleasure at so cordial a reception would have been increased tenfold. An honest Fusileer standing near me in the crowd, after scrutinizing the Turks very keenly for a minute or two, observed to a comrade, with an emphatic slap on the back, "Well, them's the chaps for my money; real fighting generals, none of yer barn door cocks!" Later in the day, the Quarter-Masters of corps announced that they had been empowered to issue an extra allowance of rum, to be drunk in commemoration of the Ottoman generalissimo's inspection, a happy *dénouement*, that, possibly, heightened the admiration of the British grenadiers for the soldiers of the Danube.

About this time Lord Cardigan and two squadrons of light horse returned to Devno, from a reconnaissance of the country about Rutschuk and Trajan's Wall. His lordship found the right bank of the Danube as clear of the enemy, as it was destitute of things eatable. Flocks, herds, men and women, had all been swept away; villages burnt, and crops destroyed. This information was dearly purchased. The march of fourteen days cost the army an immense per centage of the troop horses employed. Indeed, I am afraid to mention the number of valuable animals reported to have become *hors de combat*, through lameness and sore back. The alleged amount of casualties verges on the fabulous. Not the least curious part of the story is a statement that the Turkish lancers, who also accompanied the Earl, suffered no losses whatever. How are these things to be explained? Are we to ascribe our calamity, for calamity assuredly it was, to the avoirdupois weight of the light dragoon; or to the campaigning inexperience of the commander? To a little of both, perhaps; twenty stone in the saddle being, as Jacob Omnium justly

remarks, more than any troop horse that ever was foaled, can carry satisfactorily ; and a good cavalry general being, according to Marshal Marmont, a *rara avis in terris*. Here is the Duke of Ragusa's opinion :—" *Pour commander la cavalerie il faut des qualités supérieures, et un mérite particulier. Rien de plus rare qu'un homme sachant les manières, les conduire, et s'en servir à propos. Dans les armées françaises on en a compté trois pendant vingt années de guerre: Kellerman, Montbrun, et Lassalle. (De l'esprit des Institutions Militaires.)*

The army is now *en echelon*, thus :—The light division (Brown) at Devno, with the cavalry at hand ; the first division (Duke of Cambridge) at Aladyn ; the second division (Evans) some three miles in advance of the last named ; the third division (England) about two miles in front of Varna, where head-quarters still continue fixed. The French occupy their old ground on the heights overlooking the town.

On 7th July arrived the long talked of brevet. In some regiments, the Guards especially, it wrought considerable changes. Among the promotions to the rank of Major-General, was that of Colonel (Acting Major) Codrington, Coldstream Guards, who, instead of returning home (as did others similarly breveted, but less influentially befriended) remained with the army, obtained the first brigade, light division, (vacant by the appointment of Major-General Airey to be Quarter-Master-General, *vice* Lord de Ros) and, in little more than a year, was promoted to the chief command of the British army in the East ! An instance of rapid promotion, the military records of the French Convention might perhaps parallel. By some the brevet was objected to as ill-timed. "Coming before, instead of after the fight, this shower of promotions is irrational," they said. Good ; but John Bull was in an anticipatory mood just then, and gave triumphal banquets at the Reforma

Club, before a cutlass had been sharpened, and performed many jubilant pranks beside.

In the course of our rides about the Aladyn woods, D—— and myself came, one day, on a sort of miniature Stonehenge, built on a bald, sandy patch of ground, thickly hedged in with teeming vegetation. Here, were huge granite slabs of all imaginable shapes, cunningly balanced on rough-hewn pillars, about fifteen feet in height; there, blocks, small and great, of cut stone, lay tumbled about as if by an earthquake. No sign of a foundation, no trace of a regular plan discernible. As far as I could make out from the interpreters, the peasantry had no tradition, in connection with these curious remains, other than a surmise that they might have been the productions of Roman labour; but, as architectural science had attained the highest perfection at the period when Trajan was busy in Mæsia and Dacia, these uncouth ruins, it is obvious, had an origin long anterior to the legionary occupation of the Danubian provinces. When Napoleon invaded Egypt, he associated with the conquering veterans of Montenotti and Lodi, the most distinguished literary and scientific men then in France. He attached to his *état major* Monge, Bertholet, Fourier, Dolimeaux, Desgenettes, Larrey, and Dubois. Had our government, with such an example before their eyes, ornamented Lord Raglan's staff with a stray *savant* or two, the resources and antiquities of fertile, almost forgotten Thrace, might have been ventilated; the wanton mischief at Kertch would, at any rate, have been vetoed.

In order to increase our confined domestic accommodation, we set about building harbours; and so expeditiously did the work proceed, that, in a few days, officers and soldiers had constructed a number of cool retreats, in which they afterwards fed, smoked, and slumbered, during the mid-day heats. The most famous architect of these



ephemeral abodes was Colonel Cadogan, of the Grenadier Guards, under whose ingenious superintendence arose, as if by enchantment, a spacious vegetable pavilion, containing several considerable rooms. Under the title of "Guards' Club," this *chef-d'œuvre* of artistic booth-building became the resort of the *jeunesse dorée*, lately conspicuous in the bay windows of Pall Mall, for the rigidity of its "all-rounders" and the ambrosial amplitude of its whiskers.

To the superficial comfort of the troops, these bowers unquestionably contributed; but that they also conduced to the general health of the division is by no means certain; indeed, many doctors objected to them as impediments to the circulation of the little air vouchsafed us, and as increasing, with their decaying leaves, the animal and vegetable foulness of this insiduously beautiful spot.

On Saturday, 22nd July, draughts for the different corps of the First Division arrived at Aladyn, direct from England. Generally speaking, these detachments were made up of raw recruits, (not dismissed drill) scarcely of the average quality, perhaps. Ill-starred lads, what an awful havoc did the next two months make among them!

At this time, there was much talk about our being on the eve of some mighty achievement. That, in a fortnight at furthest, an appalling chastisement would overtake the Czar, was the topic continually discussed "under the shady, arborous roof" of the "club,"—the subject most agitated in vulgar tents and booths. Here, was a "West end" proser propounding a scheme for the destruction of Anapa; there, an unfledged Jomini whispering, "confidentially," (to all the world) the certainty of a second attack upon Odessa, in which attack, the land forces were cast for great parts; in another place, you listened to some regimental Sir Oracle, dilating on the crumpling up of Muscovy, that must surely follow an advance on Moscow. But a glance



at persons and things around, made one sceptical of the prognostications of these high-flown strategists. In the tremendous machine WARFARE, stout hearts, strong arms, and springy insteps are not the "be all and the end all;" there is a little escapement called *brains*, essential to the satisfactory working of the engine.

Ever since our deplorable settlement in the misty jungle of Aladyn, the "sick list" had been gradually on the increase. The hospital marquees were now closely packed with dysentery and low fever patients, and the number of "duty men," whose strength was being drained by diarrhoea of a scorbutic type, was not small. The surgeons complained of the extraordinary difficulty they experienced in restoring strength, once beaten down. All stamina seemed to have fled those, once iron, constitutions; nature had all but lost her elastic rebound—a strong proof of the feeble state of health into which the noble fellows had fallen. On a sudden, cholera stalked down our pale ranks; at sight of that blue-lipped apparition, procrastination started into action. At tattoo, July 26, the division received orders to march next morning for Gewleckler.

## CHAPTER VI.

## FROM THE FRYING-PAN INTO THE FIRE.

New quarters—Mussulman village—Christian ditto—Bulgarian costume—"Gird up your loins"—Pestilence—More food and less appetite—Cholera smites the French—Expedition to the Dobrutscha—Yusuf and the Bashis—Agony and death—Varna on fire—Lost in the woods—Speculations—Something "looms in the future"—Edged tools—The surgeons.

JULY 27.—We quit fatal Aladyn, abandoning a vast amount of uncleanness, and—never failing tokens of English gipsy life—countless dozens of empty bottles. We are also compelled to leave behind several score of sick, among whom is Colonel Crombie, Coldstream Guards (an old soldier, who had served many years in the "line,") seized only the day previous with a virulent dysentery. Not a man of us but felt how mournful a thing it is to desert comrades in a noisome wilderness ; but in this case, there was nothing else for it, so committing our poor friends to the care of the excellent surgeons, "told off" to assuage their dying pangs, we turned away with heavy boding hearts.

Gewleckler is a broad *plateau*, elevated about 200 feet above the pastures of Devno. It is partially wooded, and furnishes grazing ground for vast herds of brood mares and their colts. Here, at any rate, the breeze may blow with unobstructed freshness, and water of fair quality is plentiful ; consequently, this would appear to be a favorable site for an encampment.

Beneath us, where Gewleckler rises out of the valley of ill omen, is a Mohammedan village—a Bulgarian Auburn. The one-storied houses (built of wattles, cemented with mud), nestling amid blooming orchards, the high-peaked roofs of thatch, the whitewashed walls, speckled with ruddy creepers, and the packs of sun-burnt children frisking, and making mud pies, after the receipts of English infancy, before the open doors, present at first glance, a pleasant picture of rural plenty, (outward) cleanliness, and comfort; indeed, you are half inclined to exclaim, “these people at least know nothing of war, the tread of armies is nought to them;” but a second look shows the falseness of such first impressions, and suggests to your mind the following queries:—Why do the *arabas*, in most instances, want wheels? Where are the ponderous oxen which lately dragged the creaking wains? Why does the husbandman go about his business belted with pistols, and with a rusty fire-lock slung over his shoulder? The waggons are rendered useless, the buffaloes are driven away and hidden, lest the troops, hard by, should have need of them (which in truth they had), the rustic digs with gun, ready to his hand, for fear some miscreant camp-follower might fancy to pry into the mysteries of the modest *harem*, or to tamper with the poultry-yard. However, the Moslem inhabitants of the district were in general well affected toward the Allies. It was our own fault if we ever found an enemy amongst the sturdy, *Muscov*-abhorring Mussulman peasants. A conciliatory demeanour was only requisite, on our side, to secure for us the confidence, devotion, and gratitude of thousands of brave Osmanli hearts.

In an opposite direction, still nearer to our camp, is another village; out of doors, the counterpart of the little community already described, but inwardly—as regards the feelings of its inmates, at any rate—exactly the

converse. In this place, we have to do with Christians, debased disciples of the Greek priest, haters to the death of the Ottoman, toad-eaters of Muscovite majesty. To these—our-half brothers in the faith—the English uniform appears especially odious; they, one and all, avoid us. On our approach, doors are slammed, and barred, and shrill protectionist voices, from inner chambers, repudiate commercial overtures with more than Japanese asperity. In spite of the stand-off manners of these unsocial neighbours, one contrived to remark that the women, generally, are of graceful figure, and wear a costume both simple and elegant. About their heads are wound coloured kerchiefs, the elaborately embroidered ends of which hang down the back, the hems of the blue petticoats are also ornamented with tasteful needlework, and on the wrists are clasped solid bracelets, of antique fashion, wrought in brass, in bronze, and sometimes in silver. The men are tall and muscular, with well-cut Roman faces worn to the bone with heat, labour, and discontent. Their dress is, in the main, Turkish, and consists of a low fur cap, or enormous striped turban, a loose jacket, breeches of monstrous dimension, and leggings, all made of coarse brown cloth. While the neck and breast are bared to sun and storm, the loins are carefully girded up with voluminous sashes; this bandaging is a part of the toilet, never omitted; the natives affirming it to be the sole prevention against the liver complaints incidental to their climate. Many of our officers, anxious to profit by the experience of persons more sagacious than themselves, lost no time in adopting the gaudy and becoming talisman; wise in their generation were those copyists! for maugre its anti-regulation air, and its consequent offensiveness in the eyes of authority, the immemorial cholera belt of Bulgaria was subsequently—during the march through the Crimea—the means of preserving many lives.

It has been said that we quitted Aladyn with the fond hope of eluding the fell disease which had arisen from a congenial lair in the flowery thickets and green swamps of that pernicious place, but a day or two sufficed to dispel any such expectation; barely had the tent-pegs gotten hold of the new ground, before a soldier of the Scots Fusileer Guards was writhing in his last agony; then, a woman was cramp-racked; now, a pause, and men try to believe that the pestilence has passed by, that the demon has gorged himself with enough of victims. Alas! he is not satiated, he but gathers up his strength for a terrible raid among the guardsmen.

By Monday, 7th of August, the scourge had reached the intensity of bitterness. The hospital marquees, having been crowded long since, every morning, noon, and night, saw us providing fresh accommodation for the dying, by pitching bell-tents near the surgeons' quarter. In each of these canvass ovens lay, huddled together, fifteen patients. Hence, in each tent, every stage of the epidemic was personated: the strong man wrung with the first spasms; the doomed wretch cold, pulseless, livid, with myriads of flies swarming in and out of his open mouth, and clustering upon his fixed eye-balls; the blue swollen corpse just rid of unspeakable torment. Was there a soldier of the division that gazed unappalled on those immedicable heaps of tortured humanity—the quick gasping and screaming by the side of the stark dead? Not one—the boldest stood aghast, every heart was softened. In the midst of life we were in death! Whose turn next?\*

\* The Mc'Niel-Tulloch Report states that "in cholera the usual loss in our army has been about one in three at home, or on foreign stations, where the epidemic prevailed, but in the Crimea it killed two in every three attacked." In Bulgaria the mortality must have been equally great.



But how fared those whom the destroying angel spared? Sadly enough. Diarrhoea and intermittent fever were rife. I do not think 70 per cent. of the officers and privates "doing duty" at this particular time, were satisfactorily efficient. The slightest exertion knocked fellows up, and the companies' tents, which, on the healthful banks of the Bosphorus used to resound with noisy "larks" and "admirable fooling," had grown well nigh silent. A heavy torpor hung about the camp—voices rarely to be heard, except when the sergeants warned the "duties," or summoned a funeral party to "turn out." The poor men lounged about, pallid, gloomy, depressed, and, worst of signs, their appetites were remarkably affected; not half of their daily portion of pork or beef could they consume; and yet, with strange perversity, the authorities chose this moment as the apt time for super-adding an extra half-pound of meat to the rations—the original allowance being overmuch for our feeble digestions, we were to get still more! Mark the result. Large quantities of the food, provided at such prodigious cost, were, every day, flung away to rot. Would, that instead of this dis-valued *largesse*, the official mind had bethought it of an augmented issue of wholesome rice, or ever refreshing tea! Would, that the propriety of reducing the quantity, and of improving the quality of the bread had been considered.

We did not fail to observe that the immature stripplings of the recently arrived draughts were favourite victims of the pest. Sick at heart, and without stamina to resist the "leporous distilment" with which the air was charged, the washy recruits died by dozens.

On the other hand, it was noticed that the second division, made up of old soldiers, seasoned by Maltese heats, and possessing the advantage of being under

the care of our ablest general, Sir De Lacy Evans, enjoyed, comparatively, robust health.

There being nothing about the situation of the Gewlecker camp calculated to account for the extraordinary mortality suffered by the first division, many medical men surmised that those fine troops became inoculated with disease, while they lay at Aladyn ; that, in fact, the poison was latent in their blood, when they marched from those accursed woods. Perhaps this may be no random hypothesis.

Nor did cholera spare the French. At Gallipoli, the Duke d'Elchingen, son of the heroic Ney, General Carbuccia, an officer of great reputation, and many less known soldiers, succumbed thereto. In the vicinity of Varna there was also considerable havoc among our allies. In this juncture, Marshal St. Arnaud bore him nobly ; although grievously sick, he was ever up and doing ; he visited camps, he inspected hospitals, he put in force the most stringent sanatory regulations ; he sent to Constantinople for a large reinforcement of hospital attendants ; he invited those gentlest of nurses, the sisters of charity.

Meanwhile, the French expedition to the Dobrutscha was decided on, with the view, it is stated, of destroying a corps of 10,000 Russians, known to occupy that howling wilderness, and of raising the *morale* of the troops by the magic stimulus of active service. The results were evil. General Yusuf, the famous Arab soldier, at the head of 3000 Bashi-Bazouks, supported by the first division (Espinasse), second (Bosquet), third (Prince Napoleon), pushed boldly towards Trajan's wall ; and, in the neighbourhood of Kustendjé, felt the enemy. The skirmish was rude, the Bashis were dashing, and the Cossacks fled, leaving many dead behind. On the morrow, the *Spahis d'Orient* again distinguished themselves in a yet

hotter combat.\* So far all went well. The free crops had displayed a mettle keener than their best friends had given them credit for. The Zouaves and Chasseurs had borne long marches, a fierce sun, and the want of wholesome water, with a strength, constancy, and patience never surpassed. Only a night march of a few hours, and Yusuf will swoop on the main body of Muscovites lying at Babadagh ! At six p. m. an onward move is to take place.

Alas ! when that hour comes round, 500 men are stretched in agony on the ground. At eight p.m. 150 of these are dead, 350 are dying. Like a thunder storm, cholera has burst over the expedition. On that same night, the column of Espinasse sickened also. Vanish hopes of fighting ! How to escape the "bitter frost," to fly the "hellish pest," to save the gallant soldiery from annihilation, is the sole question now. By the 2nd August the epidemic had waxed so violent, that the *ambulance*, mules, and *arabas* were no longer sufficient to carry the sick ; so the chargers and baggage animals of generals and staff officers were pressed into the hospital service. At length, with a loss of nearly 2000 men, the French re-entered Varna. Such was the foray into the Dobrutscha. The issue being unfortunate, men began to murmur against the Marshal, as if *he* could have shielded off the blow of Providence ! Cease railing ! Is not

" Success the mark no mortal wit,  
Or surest hand can always hit ? "

AUGUST 10.—A terrible conflagration broke out in Varna. Notwithstanding unwearied efforts on the part of

\* On this occasion Yusuf, than whom lives no braver or more skilful leader of irregulars, wrote to St. Arnaud concerning the *Bashis*. He said—" *C'était la première fois, que je les vois au feu, et je fus tellement content d'eux que le lendemain je résolus de me porter plus en avant et d'attaquer l'ennemi énergiquement.*" These are words to silence detraction.

the troops, the flames burned furiously for ten hours, destroying considerable quantities of the French and English stores.—At last, after a fifth part of the town had become ashes, human skill got the better of the fire. Some Greeks, discovered among the crackling ruins under suspicious circumstances, died by the bayonets of those quick reasoners, the Zouaves. In all probability the wretches deserved their fate, for, that this destruction of property was the work of incendiaries, few persons doubt.

While disease decimated the ranks, and fire devoured the baggage of armies, a little incident happened at Gewleekler, which momentarily diverted the ailing division lying there.

One sunny morning, a certain captain, whom we will call M——, rode forth from the camp with the laudable intention of making a private topographical survey of the surrounding country. He had not proceeded far, before his steed, stung to madness by the insect hordes infesting the air, or excited by the vicinity of the *beau sexe* of his kind, grew restive and difficult of control; for awhile our comrade, who, among his many accomplishments did not include horsemanship, stuck with ungraceful tenacity to the pig-skin; but presently, a peculiarly exalted plunge loosened the clinging knees, hands slipt through the mane, the patrician Gilpin rolled on the ground, and “black Surrey” disappeared in the distance. And now, M——rambles bewildered to and fro, he begins to hunger and to thirst; but, having entirely missed his bearings, he knows not whither to turn, that tent might be regained and dinner realized. Evening darkens apace; he is evidently in for a night of it, and—Oh! horror of horrors!—those are Bashi-bazouks approaching! However, in place of cutting that parched gullet, the much-abused patriots entreat the wanderer kindly; they share with him their rye-bread, they give him water from their gourd, they light a fire,



and offer him the cosiest place thereat, they lend him sheep-skins wherewith to protect his dainty limbs from the mid-night damp. Morning breaks, and hapless M——, after a pantomimic expression of gratitude, parts, breakfastless, from the barbaric philanthropists, and is again on his travels. Suddenly, tents gleam ahead; joyful, the lost sheep rushes on—the worst of his trials must be over now. Wait a bit!—after an hour's trudge through bog and briar, M——, indeed, reaches a camp, but not his own old familiar camp; it is amid the second division that he finds himself—rather disappointing, this; nevertheless, he is hospitably regaled by Evans's brave boys, and, in the course of time, being full of food and information, is again homeward bound. Alas! not even yet does the curtain drop on this muddle-headed adventure. Hardly has the witless wight passed out of his hosts' sight, before, for the hundredth time, he loses his reckoning. To cut a long story short our knight errant strays a second day in the woods, and sleeps, or tries so to do, another night *sub jove frigido*, faring rudely this time, for rain falls heavily, and there are no pitying Bashis to kindle a fire, and to tuck up the belated man of fashion in flea-bitten horse-cloths. With the earliest light the poor Captain once more drags a ravening, sodden, jaded carcase into Evans's camp; and now, the worthy General himself entertains the drenched, bedraggled rover, and afterwards despatches him, under the care of an intelligent orderly, to his own regiment.

Meanwhile, there was great anxiety among ourselves. "Had we really lost old M——, for good and all?" Officers diligently beat every likely thicket far and near; Turkish cavalry were let loose on the *pashalik*, and, after a rummage of some hours, discovered the missing cavalier's charger contentedly reposing in the stable of the head-man of a neighbouring hamlet. Here was cause for suspicion of foul play, so some suggested that hostages should be de-



manded from the peasantry, others recommended that the belied rustics be terrified into confession of murder, by significant hints of burning and extermination ; however, our friend's return dissipated every ferocious thought, and created a strong reaction in favour of the natives. It must be owned that, after the first burst of congratulation had subsided, the Captain's pic-nic became the subject of some blunt, soldier-like satire ; and when it transpired that our "babe in the woods" had never been more than three miles away from us, the regimental phrenologists longed, on scientific grounds, to search his cranium for the bump of locality. I do not recollect whether the result of this examination would have been satisfactory to Messrs. Deville and Donovan.

Early in August it was known that Generals Brown and Canrobert, accompanied by some engineer officers, had returned to Varna, from reconnoitring the Russian positions on the Black Sea. Before long, a few meagre details oozed out. The little Fairy (the steamer, aboard of which the Generals sailed) had pushed audaciously close to Odessa, had had a good stare at the Circassian forts, and had been honoured with more than one fruitless shot from granite Sevastopol. Again the languid troops began to speculate ; some of us opined that, in a little while, the Liverpool of Southern Russia would be laid low, a blackened ruin,—others pretended that our chiefs had decided on the demolition of Anapa and Soud-jack Kaleh ; but the majority, luckier as prophets, foretold a descent on the Crimea, and the speedy crash of its mighty arsenal ; a good hit, certainly, although the arguments on which it was founded, namely, rash depreciation of the valour and resources of the enemy, and a vague idea, that before the honest faces of bluff Englishmen the towers of Aktiar must of necessity crumble, as did Jericho before the trumpet blasts of Joshua, were not weighty.

The vicissitudes of this protracted enterprise ought to teach self-sufficient persons the danger of presumption, and should recall to the minds of statesmen and generals a maxim of war, never to be neglected with impunity—*“Toute guerre doit être méthodique, parceque toute guerre doit avoir un but, et doit être conduite conformément aux principes, et aux règles de l’art. La guerre doit être faite avec des forces proportionnées aux obstacles, qu’on aura pu prévoir.”* (*Maximes de Guerre de Napoleon.*)

Although there was a deal of clashing opinion among us ignorant regimental officers as to the precise scene of operations, we were all agreed that something was in the wind. The whole horizon, indeed, was black with the impending storm. For several weeks past, the *Times* had been re-echoing the warlike aspirations of the British people, their discontent at the inaction of the armies, their anxiety lest the autumn should creep away without the booming of the allied artillery, their disgust at the hopes and fears and shilly-shallying of the Aberdeen government. “The press is working our case ; there will be wigs on the green before long !” “Articles like these no English minister can afford to disregard !” Thus said the soldiery, gentle and simple, because they knew the irresistible might of public opinion, and because they had confidence in the tribunes of the people (for such are our independent journals) as being the true interpreters of national sentiment.

But coming events threw their shadows before, more practically, if not more surely. From head-quarters arrived orders, directing the soldiers to be employed in the manufacture of gabions ; thereon, the poor fellows, recorded “fit for duty” in the “morning states,” marched every day to the woods, (distant about three miles from the camp) where they spent several hours ; first, in cutting long limber twigs ; and then, in twisting them, according to the teaching of intelligent sappers, into those queer

bottomless baskets which figure so conspicuously in the interminable catalogue of siege stores. The knives and bill-hooks requisite for the work were issued to the "fatigue parties" by the engineers. Pretty articles were those knives and bill-hooks—"made," as the soldiers bitterly expressed it, "for sale to government, not for *our* use!" A painful realization of the old story of the bumpkin and the razor seller.\*

Strangely jogged our way of life. On one hand, went on preparations for deeds of arms; on the other hand, resounded groans, the gnashing of teeth, and the heavy tramp of funerals. Although the relentless disease, that scourged some brigades of the army, chose its victims, for the greater part, among the younger and least hardy of the soldiery, we had still to deplore the loss of many excellent officers, and few parades "fell in," without our missing the manly form, and rough familiar face of some inestimable veteran.

In that sorrowful encampment of Gewleekler ministered not a few "good Samaritans." The watchfulness, the skill, the unwearying patience with which the regimental surgeons performed their important duties, were themes of almost universal commendation. So it came to pass,

\* The bad quality of military tools has been denounced by no less an authority than Mr. Mappin, master cutler, of Sheffield. In a letter to the *Times*, that gentleman states—"Knives and forks, gabion knives, farriers' knives, butchers' knives, &c., are made of the very commonest quality that can possibly be produced. *How ever* our poor soldiers manage to cut their pork, or to cut wood for gabions is a mystery to me, as it is well known in Sheffield, no manufacturer who makes good articles has any chance of ever obtaining a government contract for cutlery, as the goods required are so common and so low in price, that it is impossible to make an article worthy to receive any maker's name, who has any thought for his future standing in trade."

that Mackenzie, Skelton, Bostock, Wyatt, Trotter, with many another, acquired the confidence and earned the gratitude of the ranks; a confidence and gratitude, which time, disease, and misery served only to widen and to strengthen. Albeit, the merits of these admirable surgeons waited a long time for official recognition. Assuredly, the doctors may comfort themselves with the reflection, that "To some honours are given ; to others, honour."

## CHAPTER VII.

## GALATA—BOURNU.

Dismal march—Sickness and sorrow—Whiffs of Varna—Galata—Change for the better—*Anguis in herbâ* still—Death on the “Green Horse”—Pensioners (un) “fit for duty”—Locusts—Roumani and their guests—“Out with your swords”—To your ships—Soldiers’ pets—Regimental officers and their nags—Arrangement—no where—Girls, that won’t be left behind—“You’re a slow coach”—“You’re another”—“A bold spy”—The ocean child—Merchant seamen—First sight—Eupatoria—“Where shall we land ?”

The concentration of the British army round Varna being decided on, it became an anxious question how the unhealthy division, camped at Gewleckler, was to be removed into its new position ; for, be it remembered, diarrhœa and low fever had so diluted the strength of the soldiers, *nominally* “fit for duty,” that it was vain to expect those shadows of pristine lustiness to carry their packs on a march, with the August rays of the Bulgarian sun flaming overhead.\* It was quite as vain to expect aid, in such a

\* About this time the newspapers (of July 17, 1854) informed us, that Mr. Sydney Herbert (the Secretary of War) had told the Commons (in reply to a question from Sir W. Heathcote) that “a great misconception existed as to the weight carried by the British soldier ; for, an eminent authority at Varna had informed him, the said weight was a *feather* compared with the burden borne by the French.”

Of course the expression “feather” is a rhetorical exaggeration



predicament, from that puny dwarf, the baggage-train ; consequently, recourse must be had to the natives. To this end, a British officer, accompanied by an interpreter and half-a-dozen Turkish dragoons, was despatched to the Pachas of the neighbouring towns of Pravadi and Jeni-bazar, to induce their Excellencies to collect *arabas* for our use, and such admirable practical knowledge of the agricultural statistics of their pashaliks did these compliant satraps display, that, in a few days, a large number of bullock waggons awaited the behests of the first division.

AUGUST 16.—The Brigade of Guards turned their backs on Gewleckler—abhorred graveyard of their goodly kind. Seldom has there been a more dismal march. The men, very ghosts of the rosy giants, who, but six short months before, had stepped so cheerily across Waterloo Bridge, now plodded along in gloomy silence. Not the most tremulous version of a song, not the feeblest effort at a joke proceeded from the haggard ranks ; and, worst sign of all, even tobacco had fallen to a discount : when the British Grenadier loses his voice, “chaffs” not, and is careless about blowing a cloud, be sure there must be something very wrong ; and yet, ’twas the flesh alone that ailed, the spirit was willing as ever ; ay, that it was !

In the rear followed a long procession of waggons, horses, and sumpter-mules ; some laden with “packs,” others, piled up with the sumless *impedimenta* which shackle

on the part of “an eminent authority,” who would have been nearer the mark, had he suggested to Mr. Herbert that, in 1854, the Englishman and the Frenchman carried burdens of about *equal* weight ; but, owing to a *better* adjustment, the latter had *more value* for his pains—the superior lightness of his *sac* and accoutrements enabling him to bear his share of the *tent a l’abri* and other comforts besides, which the campaigning Briton never dreams of. In short, John Bull is loaded with a few *heavy* things, and *Jean Crapaud* with *many light* things !

... of a campaign :  
 ... by experience,  
 ... "tub" in a quart

...ing, neighing, winnow-  
 ... objects—the human  
 ...raps of knapsacks, or sat  
 ... and medicine chests. Here,  
 ...erly, unwholesome women,  
 ...ommissariat *araba*. There,  
 ... with lank, yellow invalids,  
 ...age.\* Of these last, every  
 ... the number ; for men, posi-  
 ... continued illness, could not  
 ...fore, "fell out" on all sides.  
 ... five miles to march, before  
 ... and ; a task which, however  
 ... circumstances, could only be  
 ... Sufficient proof of the  
 ... disease had reduced the most

... battalions were again *en*  
 ... trudge of another five  
 ... within half an hour's walk of

... through the pest-ridden  
 ... abominable scene of dust,  
 ... reeking with villainous stench.  
 ... and neared the French guard,  
 ... (poor lads ! ) struck  
 ... but that spirit-stirring air  
 ... skeletons of the *zou-zou*

... behind at Gewleckler many sick,  
 ...

tiger-cats we had so admired at Constantinople, staring at us with lack-lustre eyes, and scarcely vouchsafing *Vivent les Anglais !* Our own "dirty half hundredth" too,—the fighting "Queen's own,"—mooned listlessly on our wan array, without an "*hooroorsh !*"

We now toiled along the sandy flat, separating Varna from the pleasant southern heights, till we struck on the Adrianople road, which forces itself right over the verdant crests of the ridge ; up this steep and narrow path the brigade slowly struggled for three weary hours ; at the end of which, it debouched on a green lawn-like spot, skirted with huge forest trees, and shelving gradually towards the Euxine. Here was *Galata Bournu*, our last abiding place in Bulgaria.

In a few days, the whole British force had fallen back upon Varna, and was scattered about the high ground, to the south, wherever clear spaces and potable water could be discovered. Presently, the health of the troops began to improve ; the change of air and scene, the hope of "going at something soon," had evidently given the rare fellows a salutary fillip, for there was more bustle, more coming and going among them, conversation was carried on in louder tones, laughter, even, made itself heard sometimes ; nevertheless, cholera still lurked in our neighbourhood, creeping into our tents the moment we began to congratulate ourselves on freedom from the curse.\* The

\* It is difficult to ascertain precisely our losses by pestilence during the melancholy months of July and August, '54, but I have reason to think that Mr. Russell is, as usual, close upon the mark in estimating them as follows—"The Duke's Division (first) has lost 160 men, of these, 100 belonged to the Guards. In the Brigade of Guards there were, before the march to Varna, upwards of 600 men sick. The Light Division has lost 110 or 112 men. Sir De Lacy Evans has lost 100, or thereabouts. The little Cavalry Force has been sadly reduced by death ; and the Third Division, which has been encamped to the N.W. of Varna, close outside the town, has lost upwards of 100 men also."

awful character of its blow was strikingly exemplified in the instance of Colonel Trevelyan, of the Coldstream Guards (once of 60th Rifles). While at Gewlecker, this officer had suffered severely from diarrhoea, but the change to Galata appeared to have revived him; he was regaining flesh, and his usually cheerful spirits were returning. On the evening of the 20th, he spoke gaily of the pleasure he once more took in a cigar, and of the keen relish with which he again ate his dinner; and yet, in a few hours, his soul would be required of him. At 8 a.m., next day, he awoke in excruciating torment, and at 2 p.m., was a dead man! Poor Trevelyan! not a comrade but mourned you as he would have mourned a brother; and, at a juncture, when experience and professional knowledge were uncommon, the public lost, in you, a soldier used to command, and of considerable scientific attainments.

The Cavalry division being now camped near us, we had opportunities of again visiting our friends belonging to it. A melancholy pleasure, for death had been busy of late with those magnificent troopers. The 5th Dragoon Guards, which on landing in the East, were deemed the flower of the heavy brigade—so stalwart the men, so full of bone and breeding the horses—had greatly suffered. The senior officers were sick, the best non-commissioned were dead, the horses were perishing wholesale; so Lord Lucan wisely incorporated the regiment with the 4th Dragoon Guards, by which means, the watchful attention of Colonel Hodge was secured to the afflicted squadrons; thus, a few weeks of the deceitful Bulgarian glades had disorganized a most distinguished corps more effectually than months of ordinary fighting probably would have done—pestilence hits harder than big guns. The Horse Artillery, too, was sadly cut up; and the poor old pensioners, dragged from ease and the public-house to act the part of ambulance-drivers, were sinking rapidly below the sod.



Surely, this recourse to well-worn blunted instruments was neither judicious nor fair. How could it be supposed that grey-hairs, conjoint with rather free living, were ever likely to hold their own against a hot sun, malaria, and hard work? Veterans, that already had done the State good service, deserved better treatment.

AUGUST 23.—A wonder—About two p.m., the day suddenly darkened, and on gazing upward for the cause, it seemed as if a film were stretched across the sun's disc; anon, this gauzy veil assumed definiteness, blackness, apparent consistency. It grew into a huge inky blot, which by degrees descended towards the earth. And, now, the mystery was revealed—above our heads was

——— A pitchy cloud

Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind.

A prodigious insect host ever increasing, notwithstanding the troops of weak, or lazy ones that, tumbling from on high, strewed the ground.

To the peasantry such a visitation brings consternation, ruin almost, for these surprising hordes lay the country waste, poison wells by falling therein, taint the atmosphere, for miles round, with their putrefaction.

We lost no time in turning out "fatigue parties" to give honourable burial to the heaps of *grylli migratorii* which cumbered the lines, lest the odours arising from their decomposition (a speedy process in such blazing weather) arouse the slumbering virulence of cholera.

The hapless Principalities are changing masters. After an eventful year's sojourn among the Roumani, the Russian soldier has just re-crossed the Pruth, and, into his relinquished cantonments, have marched Austrians and Turks. Rumour has it, that the inhabitants by no means relish the advent of "the German pandours and fierce hussars" of Count Coronini. "The Muscov may be nasty in his habits and grasping in his business transactions,"



the Moldo-Wallach, says, "but the Croat is ever insolent and rapacious; hence, while we dislike the memory of the former, the very thought of the latter makes the national gorge to rise." On the other hand, the Ottomans, who have invariably been the least merciless of the oppressors of the provinces, are very differently regarded; for example, while the shapely white-coated battalions of Francis Joseph entered Bucharest amid scowls and hisses, Omar Pacha's tatterdemalion van-guard, under our gallant countryman, Sir Stephen Lakeman, was received with acclamation by the bettermost portion of the citizens; perhaps I ought to observe apologetically, that by the term "bettermost," I would designate the vulgar, but patriotic, Roumans of the middle class, not the Boyards, who, in spite of flocks and herds, and

—— "Successive titles long and dark  
 Drawn from the mouldy rolls of Noah's ark,"

are too generally pusillanimous, debauched, and servile.

AUGUST 25.—No more doubt! Marshal St. Arnaud has placarded the expedition to the Crimea in a spirited proclamation, of which the following is the peroration:—  
*"L'heure est venue de combattre et de vaincre. Généraux, Chefs de corps, officiers de toute arme, vous ferez passer dans l'ame de vos soldats la confiance dont la mienne est remplie. Bientot nous saluerons ensemble les trois drapeaux réunis flottant sur les remparts de Sébastopol de notre cri national, vive l'Empereur."*

This was the first official foreshadowing of "grim-visaged war." We waited some days longer for an intimation on the subject from our own Commander-in-Chief, who always appeared to shun anything savouring of the manifesto.

How times and fashions have changed since then! Poetry suddenly appeared at head-quarters. When least expected, an English General took to fine writing. The

cold aerological "mem" gave way to the metaphorical flash, simple statements of fact resigned in favour of pictures garish with the flowers of military rhetoric; and yet, strange to tell, the public did not cry—"Well done!"

Now, Varna Harbour and Baltchik Bay teem with "tall anchoring barks,"—English, Turkish, French. Our Allies have commenced embarking Artillery—a fever of excitement rages.

AUGUST 28.—At ten p.m. the companies' orderlies bawl, amongst the tents of the Guards' brigade, "Be ready to go a-board ship at six a.m. to-morrow." In the twinkling of an eye the camp starts up instinct with life. The darkness rings with all the business of day. No more slumbering giants, but restless soldiers! "Lights, lights!" is the cry. Doctors run to and fro, inquiring "What's to be done with the sick?" Nobody knows. Regimental officers, as they pack their chattels, continually ask, "What's to become of our bât-horses?" Nobody knows.

Early on Tuesday, the 29th, the Guards and Highlanders marched for the beach; the soldiery in highest spirits, and looking all the better for the bustle of the past night; however, just to keep us mindful of our infirmities, here and there, by the way-side, was stretched a poor fellow moaning piteously—Cholera rampant yet!

Between the ranks and ill-favoured dogs there exists a curious predilection; where is the barrack-square not infested with curs? the parade they don't dutifully attend? the line of march their steadfast loyalty does not enliven? Thus it was that even with the morose snarling brutes of Constantinople, our men struck up an acquaintance; and when we quitted the Bosphorus, there sailed with us a hideous pup of oriental origin, to which the name of "Young Scutari" had been given. Day by day, the Asiatic pet grew in the affections of the regiment, and often have I heard the soldiers, after a fond contemplation

of his uncouth vagaries, express hopes "this ere Young Scutari might go back to England with the battalion; wouldn't he look well in the Colour Court, the pretty fellow?" Vain wish; the drums beat, the colours fly, we turn our backs on Galata, and poor Scutari has licked his master's hand for the last time. As he frolicked on the flank of the regiment, a horse's hoof sent him sprawling, and, before he could recover himself, the wheel of a field-piece smashed his loins. I shall not easily forget the glassy imploring eyes which the squelched creature turned upward on his old friends, as section after section passed the quivering body. "But a dog's death is a small matter," you may say. Doubtless; still there was a simple pathos here which touched some rough sensibilities strangely; more, indeed, than did many a gory horror afterwards.

After standing for a couple of hours in thawing columns on the hot sandy beach, we found ourselves on ship-board, sitting down to a plenteous lunch of cold mutton, Cheshire cheese, and "Bass;" ample justice was naturally done to the hospitable cheer, and right merry and content we were; the die being cast, speculative arguments as to the future ceased, and every man braced himself to a determination to do his duty—come weal, come woe. One care, indeed, would obtrude itself; and being, in a way, a money question, cut deeply—"should we ever see our horses again?"—faith, there seemed little likelihood, for, owing to the hurry with which it had been deemed expedient to hustle us out of *Galata*, we had neither time nor opportunity to enter into any specific arrangements relative to the wretched beasts; the only expedient left us, therefore, was to turn them over to the tender mercies of some convalescents, reported too sickly to follow the drum. Various, of course, was the subsequent fate of this unlucky live-stock; the smaller portion falling, by chance, into honest and sober hands,

returned after many months to their owners, but the greater number came to an untimely end. Those who invested in this invalid company of "hard bargains" (limited liability) had certainly no particular reason for feeling secure; nevertheless, compared with many whose property was left without even nominal protection, they must be considered "well off." Of course, the value of horse-flesh fell to an alarming discount; indeed, I know more than one instance of a capital charger, which, a few weeks previously, had cost £35, being offered on Varna sands for 5s., bridle, saddle, and all! and such was the dearth of purchasers, at even that ruinous rate, that several proprietors in despair gave absolute freedom to their cattle.

The course pursued by the Quartermaster General with regard to the private bât-horses is unintelligible; surely, he must have decided, some days before the embarkation took place, that these animals were not to be shipped with the troops; why, then, was notice of such determination withheld from regiments? Why, at least, were officers not forewarned to make arrangements for the feeding and tending of the poor creatures? For months we had been listening to lamentations respecting the insufficiency of land-transport; and yet, when the curtain rises for the campaign, hundreds of hacks and sumpter-mules are left to rot! While so much was conflicting and contradictory, what were we to do, to think, or to understand?

What was to become of the women? In the absence of special directions on this tender subject, some commanding officers, supposing, (as they had reason to do,) that it was intended to despatch the entire bevy to Scutari, where they could be housed and fed, out of harm's way, had prevented wives accompanying their husbands on board-ship. the ladies—"they'd have  
either should humbug  
their r



them ! A pretty thing, indeed, to be after parting man and wife, as if they was work'us folks !" so they resorted to those powerful female weapons—tears and scolding ; the air was rent, and the ears of the kind adjutant-general split with shrill bewailing ! the result may be anticipated : we were one morning rather surprised than delighted to perceive the approach of boat-loads of the excommunicated " missesses."

Thus, the accommodation for the troops, between decks, already circumscribed enough, had to be narrowed still more, for the sake of deferring, for a fortnight at most, the inevitable, heart-breaking, in many cases, eternal day of " Good bye ! God bless you !"

The slow rate at which the embarkation of the army proceeded, elicited severe comments from the " croakers ;" who were, however, generally silenced by a remark, ever at hand in Bulgaria, and elsewhere, to stifle inconvenient criticism, " Oh, we're waiting for the French."

It has since transpired (as those know who have read Marshal St. Arnaud's curious journal) that at the very time we were charging our Allies with unreadiness, they were levelling a similar reproach against ourselves—*tu quoque* on the grandest scale !

SEPT. 5.—Steam up for Baltchik. On arriving, we found that the French fleet (accompanied by a Turkish squadron carrying about 8,000 Ottoman troops) had already put to sea, leaving behind a steamer or two, to await our coming.

SEPT. 6.—The wind being boisterous, we remain at anchor. It is said that, two days ago, a Russian steamer, under Austrian colours, actually ran into the midst of our transports, and, after gathering the information she required, calmly shewed her stern. As none of our war steamers happened to have steam up at the time, the unlooked-for intruder departed in peace. We are also told



that 50,000 Muscovites recently left Odessa for the Crimea.

SEPT. 7.—We got under weigh, and made a real start, joining our French and Turkish comrades on the morning of the 8th. Therefore, 60,000 Western warriors were now relying on Providence and the deep.

We had not been at sea twelve hours, before one of the women, whose coming on board has been alluded to already, presented the good sergeant, her husband, with a pledge of mutual endearment, in the thumping shape of a rosy daughter. Some sentimental individuals suggested that the infant should be baptised "Euxina," in compliment to the great water on whose boisterous bosom she had entered this wicked world; but no romantic reasoning could persuade the parents to adopt a name so pagan. "Thank you, gentlemen, but we've settled on Charlotte Elizabeth, as being more Christian-like," was the pious reply of the worthy, but unimaginative papa.

I have been assured that the industry and modest demeanour of this excellent better-half of an excellent non-com. officer were subsequently so conspicuous at Scutari, as to attract the practised eye of Miss Nightingale. A lucky chance! From that moment the

"Poor child of danger,  
Nurseling of the storm,"

has thriven under the protection of the most beneficent of women.

Sea air and wholesome ship rations are certainly magical restoratives, for our men, lately pale and languid, are growing quite ruddy and playful; notwithstanding, there's no casting loose the foul fiend—cholera. On the night of the 9th instant, nine fine soldiers died of it on board the *Andes*, and other transports report casualties from the same horrid cause.

At the word "transports," one's mind naturally reverts

to their masters, than whom no more gallant and hospitable English gentlemen ever paced a deck. I am sure there are few officers or soldiers of the noble old army of martyrs of 1854, who cannot call to mind occasions in which the jolly "skippers," with whom they had chanced to sail, stood their friends in need, ministering, like good genii, to their sad necessities, and pouring "wine and oil" on their weak and failing spirits.

Success, then, to the old Oronoco, Tonning, Trent, Alps, Himalaya, and many others, wherever they may go ! A double health to the Captains, Mates, and Seamen of the British Mercantile Marine.

SEPT. 12.—The first glimpse of the Crimea. Out the black waters emerges the sandy coast of mysterious Taurus. A moment—never to be forgotten !—fire flashes in the dullest eye, the most leaden hearts leap ; not a smock-faced ensign but glows with the martial rage of the old war-horse, that smelleth the battle afar off !

N. B.—To the surprise of many, who had never consulted Dr. Clarke, we were this morning favoured with a pelting hail-storm, abundantly accompanied with snow.

SEPT. 13.—Off Eupatoria, a town of about 8000 inhabitants, famous for the salubrity of its site, and an important trade in the delicate fur, called Astrachan. The country round about is level and unpromising, but the place itself looks pleasant enough : there are mosques and white-washed houses, and luxuriant gardens. We make out a few soldiers, in flat-topped forage caps, and long grey coats down to their heels, standing outside their guard-house—staring, I dare say, with all their might and main. On the beach, too, actually appear three or four bathing machines, quite *à la* Brighton ; one of them is axle-deep in water, and C——, renowned for the perfection of his "race-glass," thinks he can distinguish something in oil-skin cap and orthodox blue chemise, that bobs up and

down in the gentle billows, quite regardless of the menacing vision crowding the horizon—forests of masts, hundreds of smoking funnels, acres of angry canvass. Assuming my friend's fancy to be fact (which *credat judæus*) we have here a notable instance of philosophy in a naiad. And now, a boat pushing off from the Caradoc, (the head-quarter steamer) pulls for the little pier, by this time blackened with alarmed *bourgeoisie*. Two staff officers, the one French, the other English, step ashore and formally summon the good people to surrender. We can see the crowd press around the Colonels, and we suppose a parley to be taking place; by-and-bye, the whole *posse comitatus* moves off in the direction of a large stone building—the town hall, doubtless—where Eupatoria and all its appurtenances are formally handed over to the safe keeping of the Allies. The entire business lasted but a few minutes, the municipal authorities and the unfortunate Major, who commanded the garrison of Invalids, yielding to the pressure from without with alacrity and politeness.\*

A few French and English marines, with an Ottoman battalion, were "placed in orders" for duty at Eupatoria; and all minds, great and small, became absorbed in preparations for the "first act of an imperial theme,"—to-morrow's landing.

It is pretty generally known that, at one time, M. de St. Arnaud and Lord Raglan were not perfectly agreed as to the most suitable place for disembarkation. The old African *moustache* advocated a landing at the Katcha, in the face of a Russian corps, which, it had been ascertained

\* Marshal St. Arnaud has the following observation, in his Note-book, on the surrender of Eupatoria—" *A la première sommation Eupatoria s'est rendue de la manière la plus naïve. Le Commandant Russe a répondu—" Nous sommes tous rendus faites ce que vous voudrez.*"

by a recent reconnaissance, lay there in no great force. The proximity of the river Katcha to Sevastopol would counterbalance, the Marshal argued, any loss we were likely to sustain in the act of getting ashore. On the other hand, a clear beach appeared to Lord Raglan of greater consequence than vicinity to the object of ultimate attack. By several of the French Generals, Theodosia, a town on the Eastern coast of the peninsula, about 70 miles from Sevastopol and 20 miles from Kertch, was pointed out as the preferable point at which to set foot on Russian soil. Nor was this last proposition without the weightiest strategic reasons, which, it is now needless to discuss.

We are told that there was a lively discussion on this most important question, but that in the end the opinion of the Englishman prevailed. The landing, it was decided, should take effect at OLD FORT, where the beach lay low and sandy, free of the enemy, and about 12 miles south of Eupatoria.\*

\* "A une heure les officiers généraux partis en reconnaissance reviennent. On a reconnu un point de débarquement entre Eupatoria et l'Alma, qui offre plusieurs avantages, c'est Old Fort. Les Russes sont préparés à Alma, à la Katcha au Bebec, ils ne sont pas à Old Fort. Avec de fausses attaques sur plusieurs points, le débarquement sera plus facile en cet endroit, j'aurais préféré un débarquement de vive force à la Katcha plus rapprochée de Sevastopol. Je crains les 5 lieues à faire pour arriver à l'eau, cependant je cède. On débarquera à Old Fort."—(Journal of Marshal St. Arnaud.)

## ACT II.

“READY! PRESENT!”

“Fight, gentlemen of England! fight, bold yeomen!  
 Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head!  
 Spur your proud horses hard, and ride in blood;  
 Amaze the welkin with your broken staves.”

K. RICHARD III.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### OLD FORT.

Officers' kits—Soldiers' necessaries—Preparation for the shore—  
 “Rooshians” on the look out—The General's “close shave”—  
 “Arm, arm, ye brave”—The war's first blood—A dish of fruit—  
 “*O, quel plaisir d'être soldat*”—Who's to blame?—“To bed, to  
 bed”—Raining cats and dogs—Our lodgings—Pot of all work—  
 French and Turks sheltered—Blue jackets—Component parts of  
 the army—Much sickness and few doctors—False alarm—Water  
 scarce—A village—The justice of “our system”—Full of heart.

IN the early morning of that ever memorable Thursday,  
 14th of September, 1854, the allied fleets threatened the  
 sandy beach of OLD FORT. We gazed on a quickening  
 picture. Here, steamed an armada, under which the  
 waters trembled for a space of nine miles; there, scowled  
 a forlorn strip of sterile shore, grimly diversified with a  
 little salt lake, animate with screaming wild fowl.

Aboard the ships all was astir. It had crept out that



regimental officers would be allowed no transport for their baggage; that on their own backs they must carry, like the rank and file, whatever of clothing, food, and comfort they might consider needful. This announcement at once pared down the sum of our necessities to a figure which Spartan Agesilaus would have commended.

For the first time agreeing that

"Man wants but little here below,  
Nor wants that little long,"

we crammed into our haversacs the following items: in the way of sustenance—salt pork, biscuit, rum, and tea, for three days' consumption: of clothing—two pair of socks, two towels, a couple of handkerchiefs, a shirt: of comforts—a tooth-brush, comb, knife, fork, and spoon (the three last set in the same handle, as contrived by Messrs. Mappin), a "tot" or tin-mug, a bit of soap; such—with the addition of the cloak rolled so as to be worn like a hoop across the shoulder while on the march; a "Colt" stuck into the Turkish sash; and a "Dollond" slung anywhere out of the way—constituted the catalogue of "kit" deemed requisite in most instances; here and there, indeed, some peculiarly robust lieutenant, confident in the brawn of his back and the thickness of his calves, might have been observed putting up a more extensive wardrobe, and a load of extra *comestibles*; but alas! men so athletic and self-reliant were exceptions to the general rule.

With regard to the soldiers' necessities, the worthy Adjutant-General was induced to sanction an unfortunate arrangement. Instead of allowing things to take their natural course—*i.e.*, letting Giles pack his little matters in his knapsack, as he had always been used to do—orders were issued that every man was to wrap up a pair of shoes, a pair of socks, a shirt, and a forage cap in his blanket and great coat! thus was formed a big shapeless bundle, which could not fail to wobble uneasily

on the victim's back, to heat him, to gall him, to squeeze curses out of him.

The knapsacks themselves, with divers articles of the soldier's private property, were to be left behind on ship-board ; but in whose keeping, nobody would take on himself to say.

"I can defend myself from my enemies, but God help me from my friends."—(Full Private *loquitur*.)\*

It is eight a.m., and Admirals Dundas and Lyons (on whom the disembarkation arrangements devolved, and who certainly performed their task with uncommon skill,) have worked the noble fleet into lines fronting the beach. Our Allies are anchored on our right ; and some English and French steamers (the latter having General Forey's division on board) have started, for the purpose of divert-

\* In his address to the Chelsea Commissioners, Sir Richard Airey alleged that the army landed in the Crimea *without* knapsacks, because the soldiers were then too weak to carry them. Now, does it not strike the Major-General that a superior adjustment may be an ample compensation for a little extra weight? Does he not recollect too that, in this case, the extra weight was not worth mentioning, inasmuch as the only heavy part of the knapsack, viz., its wooden frame, had been discarded several weeks previously? Does he not know that, throughout that arduous march, our Allies bore their *sacs*, in addition to cooking utensils, and portions of the *tent à l'abri*? Or, will he pretend, that the British soldier was "not up" to the same load as his French comrade? Yet, more, will the Quartermaster-General tell us how he expected the soldier to preserve his necessaries from wet, and nimble fingers *after* dark, when the great-coat and blanket (which during the day so clumsily supplied the place of the pack) were unrolled for use? Ignored in the Crimea, and condemned at Chelsea, the following maxim of Napoleon is nevertheless worth the notice of British officers:—" *Il est cinq choses qu'il ne faut jamais séparer du soldat; son fusil, ses cartouches, son sac, ses vivres, pour au moins quatre jours, et son outil de pionnier. Qu'on réduise son sac au moindre volume possible, si en le juge nécessaire, mais que le soldat l'ait toujours avec lui.*"

ing, with a little shell practice, a Russian corps camped on the coast, about ten miles to the southward.

The decks are strewn with accoutrements, &c., ready to be donned, at a moment's notice; and every eye strains upon, every tongue babbles about, the land. Presently, human beings become visible amidst the sand-hills: scurvy-looking knaves in grey watch-coats, mounted on active, shaggy ponies, and armed with long, unpleasant-looking flag-less spears, are watching our proceedings; anon, a more important actor treads the stage; an officer in green uniform, who, after coolly examining us through a portentous spy-glass, scribbles the result of his researches in a note-book. As he writes, we observe some of the dingy cavaliers, above-mentioned, clustering around him; to receive orders probably, for, in a few minutes, both officer and troopers are spurring hard in all directions.

Wherefore that great shout of *Vive l'Empereur*? The French have managed to be first in the field, and General Canrobert plants the tricolour in the Crimea. By a curious coincidence, exactly forty-two years before—14th September, 1812—the *Grand Armée* of the Emperor Napoleon entered Moscow in triumph! Was the augury good, or bad?

About ten, a.m., the British began to quit their ships. A company of that glorious old corps, the Rifle Brigade, were, I believe, the first Englishmen that gained a footing on Russian territory. These dashing fellows were headed by their old chief, Sir George Brown, who shortly afterwards had a narrow escape of being forwarded to St. Petersburg, as a sample—ay, and a good one too—of the fine old British officer. Intent on a *reconnaissance*, this brave soldier pushed eagerly forward, without due regard to what might take place on his flanks. The hawk-eyed children of the Don, who, by this time, were rather

thickly scattered over the face of the surrounding country, saw their chance. They crept stealthily upon the unwary commander ; they had nearly compassed him round about, when he became aware of his peril, and fell back on the "Sweeps,"\* a shot or two from whose rifles sent the rascals scampering.

At length, the first and light divisions, which had been chafing like greyhounds in the leash for the last three hours, received orders—"Packs on." Breathless with excitement, we got into harness. It would be difficult to imagine more hideous figures than most of us cut, when girded for work ; officers of small stature, in particular, looking like animated lumps of undigested packages, all cloak, bundle, and hairy cap. The rank and file too, by no means, presented a comfortable appearance. Riding on their backs, in every conceivable and inconceivable trim, were those preposterous conformations of watch-coat, blanket, and "sundries," garnished with cooking utensils of various sorts. Greasy haversacs, (severally pregnant with 4-lbs. of pork, three days' biscuit, and a ration of rum) together with the wooden water kegs, had resting places on the left hips. Sixty rounds of ammunition reposed on each man's loins. The Minié was the object of every right hand's solicitude, and all perspiring heads were imbedded in towering shakoes of bearskin.

It's our turn at last : a huge flat, towed by a man-o'-war's boat pulls alongside, and one by one we tumble out of the dear old ship, amidst valedictory hurrahs from her tars ; screams of "keep your 'pecker' up chaps," from the more strong-minded of the deserted females ; and an hysteric flourishing of damp handkerchiefs by the younger matrons, whom a "tenderer hefted nature," made "like Niobe, her children gone"—

\* A nick-name for Rifle-corps much used by red-coat regiments.

“ ————— Woe the while!  
O cut my lace, lest my heart cracking it,  
Break too ———.”

We had barely got into open column on the beach, and piled arms, before the first blood of the war was drawn : the innocent blood of a poor Tartar lad. It seems that a picquet of the seventh Fusiliers, having observed some Cossacks trying to carry off the boy's *araba*, fired two or three shots into the midst of the marauders. The result was, as often happens in such cases, unsatisfactory ; the ruffians, for whose benefit the bullets were intended, remaining untouched, while the blameless carter lost a big toe. Although the surgeons declared “there was no danger so far as the victim's life was concerned,” we all grieved at this untoward accident. The wounded Crim's waggon happening to be laden with fruit for the Simpheropol market, a scramble took place among the soldiers and sailors, for a share of the godsend. Of all the plunderers, the most successful was a tall, voracious, and meagre mate of one of the transports, who, thanks to the length of his lank arm, calmly helped himself to the good things over the heads of the eager throng that pushed and shoved more angrily than profitably, about the wheels of the *araba*. This fellow, although lean as a whipping post, must have been made of unusually elastic materials, for I never met the cormorant, fat or thin, who could stow away an equal quantity of apples, pears, and bullety plums, with a like gusto and facility.

The day had dawned in glory, but toward noon the horizon began to lower, and before long we were favoured with some smart showers ; however, we laughed to scorn such insignificant moisture, and waxed wrath with the weather-wise that presumed to predict a wet night—a contingency, it must be confessed, which the most ardent of our new fledged Paladins scarcely contemplated with usiasm.



The Lights had already marched inland, and now the First Division followed. After climbing the ridge of red sandstone, that walls the strand on the east, we gained a bare and slightly undulating plain, rich only in sweet smelling and very prickly weeds; as we trudged on, however, the sight of clumps of trees, corn ricks, and white farm houses, dotted sparsely in the distance, duped us into pleasant, but groundless calculations, relative to the future of the victualling department. Foolish reasoners that we were, how came we to ignore the skulking Cosack, and the flaming torch?

After a walk of about three miles, sometimes sinking up to the knees in the aromatic dagger-bladed herbage, sometimes splashing ankle deep in slimy bog, we halted for the night on a bit of ground rather bleak and unsheltered.

The first bivouac of the British army was certainly not inaugurated under auspicious circumstances. As day grew old, and the look of the sky became fouler and more foul, the men began to examine their watch-coats with unusual attention, and, seeing how thread-bare was the well-worn "shoddy," shrugged their shoulders ruthfully, and wished for the old canvas, once so despised.

The first duty of course was to light fires, no easy task, considering the all but impossibility of obtaining fuel; but somehow the handy old soldiers managed to scrape together rubbish that *would* burn, with a good deal of coaxing; so, before long, the water was boiling for tea, and all hands were rummaging in their haversacs, for the stodgy hunches of salt pork, destined to be our *pièces de résistance* for the next three days.

Notwithstanding the rather uncomfortable novelty of the occasion, the utmost good humour prevailed; in the brave fellows were a host of "Mark Tapleya," mined on being jolly, come what might. Joyous round bivouac fires, and roars of manly

reward such mild *facetiae* as this. "I'm in a hurry for supper this evening, so never mind laying the cloth, my dear."

When (thanks to the unrivalled press of our country) "the horrible and heart-rending" tale of Crimean suffering first appalled England, no effort was spared in high quarters, to mystify the public as to the causes of that matchless wretchedness. An amiable nobleman, with almost hard words, declared the rank and file to owe their sickness and death, "their houseless heads and unfed sides, their loop'd and window'd raggedness," wholly to their own apathy, and ignorance of "common things." A cabinet minister, mistaught by some interested informant, insinuated that the regimental officers were the persons in fault; and the Premier, in a strain of triumphant arrogance, pointed out the medical and commissariat branches of the army—"parties certainly not connected with the aristocracy"—as the head and front of the breakdown.

Away with slander! Away with these flimsy attempts to buttress class interests, to bolster up two or three individual reputations at the expense of the saviours of British prestige and honour.

Would that these stay-at-home censors, these feather-bed calumniators had lain, during that never-to-be-forgotten night, amongst the soldiers in the oozing slush. Would they had learned by hard experience, by footing it in the ranks, by night watchings on picquet, how patient and enduring, ay, how quick of invention, and rich in resource, were the non-commissioned officers and privates of our *old* army, despite a military education, shallow and imperfect, despite a combination of circumstances scarcely to be paralleled in history. Englishmen! turn aside from the sophisms of Downing Street, be deaf to the pleadings of Belgravia, and erect but one statue in

commemoration of the Crimean war—the statue, in gun-metal, of a simple Grenadier !

Just as we were finishing supper, a few drops of the dreaded rain warned us of the propriety of betaking ourselves to bed, before the sods, selected to act as couches, became quite soaked. There was not a moment to lose ; hardly were the haversacs disposed beneath our heads, (very knotty and ill-savoured pillows, being stuffed with pork, biscuit, rum-flask, “ tot,” knife, note book, and other angular ingredients) and our martial cloaks, disposed comfortably about us, than out went the light of day, and forth burst the storm.

A few feeble splutterings, and the carefully nursed fires died out, a few minutes of dogged resignation, or, of muttered imprecation, and the army assumed the likeness of so many drowned rats. Against such a remorseless downfall, the transparent “ammunition” blankets, and contract great-coats could not hold out for a quarter of an hour.

The wet was not our only foe ; as the night wore on, the wind freshened, and the cold grew cutting. This new affliction was, perhaps, more grievous than the rain, for the intolerable pain of half-frozen feet would ever and anon force poor drenched, exhausted wretches to arise out of the sloppy mire, and walk, or rather stagger about for a while. This grim diversion answered little purpose beyond making the shiverers regret their splashy lairs, as soon as something akin to circulation had been restored.

No courtier was that sullen storm. It gave rough but fair play to all. High and low, rich and poor, wise and foolish, came in for an equitable ducking. Traitors to the House of Hanover, “ the to and fro conflicting wind and rain ” buffeted his Royal Highness of Cambridge with as steadfast a rancour as the mere sentinel ; Sir George Brown reposed under an *araba*, and

was considered lucky in being so daintily put up ;

“ The sum of our necessities is strange  
That can make vile things precious.”

Pursy Colonels used all their lives to well-carpeted chambers and feather beds, dozed in the puddle with the stoicism of hippopotami, and the chaplains—ever cheerful and unrepining—bore them in this adversity with a serene hardihood that gained for the parsons the admiration of the rudest and most ungodly Grenadiers.

But one tent, I believe, stood amongst us that night. (Head-quarters, it may be mentioned, remained on board ship.) It was the tent of Sir De Lacy Evans, whose staff, being composed of officers selected for reasons irrespective of pedigree or pelf, had not forgotten to have their beloved General properly housed.

The sun shone bright the next day (Friday, 15th). What a mercy, for it enabled us to dry our dripping clothes, and to eat our sodden breakfasts in comfort, and with good appetites; maugre the roughness of the cookery, and no particular piquancy in the viands themselves; but how little does man really require, so long as his health continues tolerable;—“there’s the rub.” Our toilet was very expeditious, the washing part being barbarously economical; a pint of greenish brackish water—the measure *à l’hôtel*, not imperial—sufficed for hands, face and all. But I must not forget to celebrate the remarkable vessel that ministered to these, rather unsatisfactory, ablutions—to wit, one’s servant’s “mess-tin.” In the morning, this priceless pot served as basin and foot-pan; on the march, it conveyed the meat; in the evening, it was the receptacle, in which water was boiled for tea; its lid doing duty for a plate, whenever called on.

The dire experience of the previous night went far to convince some of our bigoted Conservatives, of the un-

suitableness, for harsh campaigning purposes, of that gaudy panoply which used to sparkle so beautifully at guard mounting, and to win, for its gallant wearers, such admiring glances at the Queen's balls.

The moderate favour, with which "staff arrangements" were generally regarded, was not increased by the discovery, that, while we English had to brave the fury of the elements as best we could—wholly unprotected and unprovided for; the French lay with comparative snugness under their little *tents à l'abri*; and the Turks smoked *chibouks* beneath excellent canvass—thanks to the provision of their Admiral, Muchavir Pacha (Slade).\*

As was expected, the results of the ten hours' wetting soon showed themselves in the mortal form of cholera, which frightened the authorities into sending a few tents ashore: never was boon better appreciated.

Although the day was fine overhead, the wind continued to blow hard, and the surf boiled fiercely on the beach; it was therefore a slow, and indeed dangerous business to get the troop-horses landed; and as men watched the peril in which those invaluable seamen and horses were placed by the rudeness of the gale, they shook their heads, and bemoaned (when too late), the fortnight of calm weather so unaccountably frittered away in dodging, here, there, and everywhere, about the Black Sea.

It would be impossible to overpraise the sailors, both man-o'-war and merchant, for the zeal and ingenuity with which they struggled against the obstacles that impeded the debarkation of the Cavalry and Artillery. Our "tars" are indeed fine practical fellows! how they do put the shoulder to the wheel; no folding of the arms, and appeals to Jupiter, with them.

The morning shed light upon the position taken up by

\* The *tent à l'abri* was invented by General Bedeau—now an illustrious exile from France.



the Allies : The French had the right, their first division (Canrobert) resting on the coast ; the English held the left, their outward flank (composed of first and light divisions) leaning on a Tartar village.

The British force was constituted as follows :—The light division (Sir George Brown), first brigade ; 7th, 23rd, 33rd Regiments under Major-General Codrington (just promoted from Coldstream Guards) ; second brigade, 19th, 77th, 88th, and second battalion Rifle Brigade, under Colonel G. Buller, C.B. The first division (H. R. H. Duke of Cambridge), first battalions of Grenadier, Coldstream, and Scots Fusilier Guards under Major-General Bentinck. The 42nd, 79th, and 93rd Highlanders, under Major-General Sir Colin Campbell, K.C.B.

The second division (Sir De Lacy Evans, K.C.B.), first brigade (Pennefather), 30th, 55th, 95th Regiments ; 2nd brigade (Adams), 41st, 47th, 49th Regiments.

The third division (Sir R. England, K.C.B.), first brigade (Sir J. Campbell), 1st, 38th, 50th Regiments ; 2nd brigade (Eyre), 4th, 28th, 44th Regiments.

The fourth division (newly arrived, Sir George Cathcart, K.C.B.), 20th, 21st, 63rd, 1st battalion Rifle Brigade ; 46th and 57th Regiments not yet come to hand.

The Cavalry (Earl of Lucan) light brigade under the Earl of Cardigan ; heavy brigade still at Varna, or at sea.

The above (Artillery and Engineers inclusive) formed a formidable mass of about 27,000 veteran troops. The French army (in spite of M. de Bazancourt's assertion to the contrary) was, I am informed, numerically weaker by nearly 1,500 men.

The large amount of disease induced by the storm proved (as many Cassandras had prophecied) the medical department to be short-handed ; thus early did horrors accumulate. Who has not heard of the mortal agonies on the beach of Kalamita ? Draw a veil over the frightful and the disgusting story of that lazar-ship, the Kangaroo !

The surgeons themselves are not to be blamed ; they did all that active and educated men could do, they drudged late and early, their every faculty was devoted to the sick, but no benevolence, no energy, no ingenuity, can make *one* man capable of performing the duties of *five*. There is a point beyond which poor human hands and brains cannot go. But we have a right to complain of those ministers, who, in opposition to military history, in spite of the warning voice of Guthrie, in spite of the reiterated entreaties of the press, in spite of premonitory sickness in Bulgaria, sent an army into an unknown and hostile country without an adequate supply of medical necessities and assistance.

We lay down to rest on the evening of the 15th with hopes of passing a dry night, and of snatching a few hours of refreshing repose, under the shelter of the tents. We might be somewhat crowded perhaps (every officer's tent containing six, every soldier's sixteen, largely developed bodies), but, as the night was chill, what if we were at close quarters ? the more the merrier ! Swallow-tailed coatees, with their irruptions of lace and buttons, tight pantaloons, and "Runciman" shooting boots, being by no means conducive to luxurious slumber, had, in the majority of instances, been peeled off, and therefore, went to swell and still further to entangle the medley of shakoes, swords, belts, revolvers, spy-glasses, and haversacs, piled around the tent-pole. The canvass walls being pegged closely down, the door tied up, and ourselves carefully tucked in our cloaks, we successfully wooed the

" Chief nourisher of life's feast."

Like babes we slept ; we dreamt innocently of home, of its green fields, of its good dinners, of its kindly faces, and, for the moment, reflections about Menschikoff and British bayonets, about medals and amputations, ceased to burden the mind. These happy visions were of short duration.

Suddenly (about 12 p.m.) there pealed out the most demoniac pother mortal ears were ever stunned with ; up started the sleepers, they rubbed their heavy lids ; and as yet but half awake, murmured, incoherently, "What's the row ? Is hell let loose ? Do we dream ?" The uproar increased, shouts, yells, oaths, mixed with the sound of men running to and fro. Presently, there was a frantic fumbling at our tent door, and a faithful, but affrighted domestic, poking his head through the aperture, shrieked—"Cossacks ! Cossacks !" and vanished. An indescribable scene followed. Like mud-larks scrambling for half-pence at Greenwich, we precipitated ourselves upon the arms, garments, and equipments, stacked round the tent-pole. "Where are the lucifers ?" "Where the deuce have my trowsers got to ?" "I can't find my sword !" "Those are my boots !" "Where are those infernal servants ?" "I say, Johnson, Tomkins, Hoggins !" All the while sergeants kept bellowing, "Fall in, men ! fall in !" Time pressed ; any moment a free-booting spear might be expected through the canvass ; necessity has no law ! the devil takes the hindmost ! so out we sallied into the clamorous night, every man of us in the scantiest toilet imaginable. One was *minus* shoes, another "went unbonnetted," a third unarmed, a fourth *sans culottes*, a fifth had lost his cloak and coat in the *mêlée*, and was fain to appear in his shirt sleeves.

Now, a dead stillness ! the files were "told off," and we grimly awaited the onset of the foe. Half-an-hour passed in heart-beating expectation, but no warrior tramp, no clatter of hoofs disturbed the black silence. Generals became impatient, for they were growing cold, and it was whispered in the ranks that the alarm was neither more nor less than—

"A tale,

Told by some idiot, all sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing."



And so, indeed, it turned out. An advanced picquet, imagining it heard, or saw something, jumped to the sagacious conclusion that that something must be a horde of Cossacks ; hence, the cry of Wolf ! Wolf ! which upset the camp, and robbed the weary soldiers of the best part of their rest. When we betook ourselves to earth again, the conduct of that nervous outpost was forcibly commented upon.

After tents had been allotted us, there was nothing to complain of at Old Fort beyond scarcity of water ; but that was no joke. The fatigue-men of some divisions were obliged to walk over four miles to the well-head, and, having reached it, had frequently to wait hours before their turn came for filling the bottles with a somewhat nauseous and Thames-like fluid. The great disproportion between supply and demand had the effect of diminishing ablution to an incredible extent.

About two miles from the left flank of the army stood a tolerably clean Tatar village. On our first coming, it presented no disagreeable picture of rude plenty ; there were pleasant-looking stacks of corn in the farm-yards, flocks of poultry cackled about the streets, and an abundance of grain was stored in underground granaries, called *silos* ; the inhabitants (whose costume is similar to that of the Bulgarians) being a little dapper race, clean limbed, and clear complexioned, with snub noses and bead-like eyes, set too wide apart for beauty. These good folks received us with open arms, and were delighted (before the proceedings of a few light-fingered, unscrupulous gentry had cooled their admiration for the Allies) to enter into commercial relations. Business was certainly done on advantageous terms for us, and, I suppose, for the Crims too. A sheep, about the same size and cut as Welch mutton, costing two Turkish shillings, and a fat

fowl changing hands at from 4d. to 5d.; so we lived well just then.

As this village filled an important point on our position, it had been occupied, since the landing, by three companies of the Rifle Brigade, under Major Norcott, whose measures for the security of the place evinced military skill and energy of purpose. The population, too, ought to thank their stars that Allah had placed their wives and property under the charge of a soldier so resolute, vigilant, and humane. The career of this meritorious officer bears conclusive testimony to the viciousness of the "purchase system." Nature had blessed him with talents, study had given him professional knowledge; but he was poor, consequently he had been "purchased over" times out of number, and at the opening of the campaign was only a Major, notwithstanding 32 years' "full pay service" in every part of the globe!

SEPT. 18.—The cavalry and artillery are safe ashore at last, and to-morrow we positively "move on." All manner of surmises as to the intentions of the enemy. Canrobert, we are told, believes we shall come to blows on the banks of the Alma; other authorities expecting to fight on the Katcha. *Nous verrons.* We are again deprived of those unspeakable luxuries—the tents, the administration having discovered that it cannot obtain *arabas* enough to carry them. One's thoughts therefore revert to the poor *bât-horses* starving at Varna!

8 P.M.—The soldiers, in highest spirits at the prospect of the *route*, are singing lustily, round the watch-fires, "Rule Britannia," and "The British Grenadiers." Noble fellows! they will pull us through *anything*, in spite of *anybody*! Well did Sir Harry Smith observe to the good folks of Stafford, "No matter what mistakes a General might commit, the pluck of the British army would set it all right."



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE ALMA.

Onward—"Clearances"—No ambulance—Our first brush—Pious soldier—Getting into our places—Eat and be filled—A look before the leap—State of things on both sides—Pros and Cons—Matchless foot—Plan of attack—Disposition of the forces—Rush of the Zouaves—Light division to the front—"Fie; contrary to regulation"—Shot begins to tell—"Look out for your legs"—Lap dog at play—Weight of Russian ordnance—Bravo, Brown!—Well done Evans!—"Now for it, Guards"—Warm greeting—How man and beast stood it—Not too soon—Fire languishes—Columns ahead—British cheers—File firing—Nulla vestigia retrorsum—Disobedience profitable sometimes—Into their hearts, boys!—The day's our own—Escape—Casualties, &c.

In the glimmering dawn of Tuesday, the 19th, the camp is up and stirring. Of the soldiers, some are boiling water for breakfast, others, packing their bundles. The field officers look to their chargers; the surgeons inquire anxiously about the *bât* horses, which are to carry the medicine-panniers (one beast being allowed for this purpose to each regiment); last but not least, the poor commissariat labours hard to make both ends meet, *i.e.* to store considerable *impedimenta* into the limited number of *arabas*, which the active D. A. C. G.'s had succeeded in hiring from the Tartars, at an expense of much palaver, and of more *piastres*.

By 8½ o'clock, a.m. the armies were moving. On the right, covered by the fleet, marched the French. On

the left, about three miles to the rear, were displayed the British colours.

The advance of those superb battalions of ours was an august, a moving spectacle. It was a sight that made every man-at-arms thank God he had been born an Englishman; it was a sight to fire the genius of the great Captain, and to trouble the equanimity of the mere general officer, oppressed with the sense of his responsibility, and doubtful as to the range of his capacity.

Not a cloud in the heavens, the day sultry, the country through which we pass one vast rolling plain, bare of trees and shrubs, with here and there meagre patches of cultivation skirting the smouldering ruins of once happy Tartar homesteads; rare hands at arson are those Cossacks! The Russian Lancers too had swept our line of march clear of peasantry, and flocks and herds; every living creature indeed had been driven away from us at the spear's point, with the exception of hundreds of hares, which "small deer," maddened by so awful an invasion of their territory, scampered desperately amongst the ranks, and were knocked over in dozens by the soldiers.

For the first two hours, we bore the fatigue, and the almost vertical glare tolerably well; but afterwards, men began to "fall out," and cases of wretches rolling over and over again on the ground, biting the dust, and screeching in the red-hot pincer-like grip of cholera became more and more frequent.

And now an astounding fact became patent to all—we had no ambulance! We had invaded an enemy's country without means of transporting the sick and wounded beyond a few "stretchers" in the hands of bandmen and drum-boys! The sick and wounded of 27,000 British soldiers were to be carried bodily over burning steppes, where water was not, by drummers and fifers! These lads being physically unequal to the duty expected of them, we

endeavoured to supply their places with files of the heavy-weighted soldiery ; but, of course, this hard expedient broke down too ; the work could not be done by human muscle, in fact ; hence, tall fellows, not a few, were left behind—to take their chance of being picked up—God help them !

Here, let us enquire how it happened that, while the French, whose transport fleet was small compared with ours, landed in the Crimea with a complete *service* of hospital carts and mules, and, moreover, were so well furnished with bāt horses, that the *administration* undertook the carriage of the regimental officers' baggage (at the rate of one horse between five officers), the English army, sustained by the most magnificent fleet of transports the world ever saw collected, went forth to battle *in formā pauperis* ; its regimental officers limping along under the unfamiliar weight of their luggage ; its sick unprovided for : those paltry stretchers and their concomitant drummers being downright mockeries.

Most of this destitution may doubtless be set down to a simple cause, viz., military inexperience—ignorance of the requirements of war. Had our General and his Staff possessed, in September '54, a tithe of the knowledge which "battle, murder, and sudden death" revealed to them a few months later, it is probable they would not have rested satisfied, till the Admirals had been persuaded, so far to forego "regulation" as to have consented to the conveyance of a portion of the army on board men-of-war.\* By which arrangement, a few freight-ships would have been available for the reception of the ambulance train, and so many of the baggagers (left to starve at Varna) as might have sufficed to carry the companies' tents, &c. It was

\* After many shiftings from ship to ship, two companies of Guards were ultimately conveyed to the Crimea in a vessel of war ; the only instance of the kind I am aware of.



by adoption of this plan, that our Allies marched towards Sevastopol stocked with the requisites for a modern campaign. It was in no small degree through neglect of it, that the British suffered so grievously.

About three p.m., as we were shambling along half-dead with heat, and drought, we suddenly came upon what, to us, seemed a beautiful sight indeed—the little dirty brook of Buljanak ; here a halt was called, so the men tossed aside their loads, and flinging themselves on the ground, lapped up the water, like thirsty horses, or, as did the Israelites after Moses had struck the rock. The breathing time and these copious draughts instilled new life into us, and we trudged on again with bounding spirits.

It is four p.m., and we are close to the bleak *plateau* designed for our bivouac, when bang! bang! bang! “Hullo! there go the Rooshians any how,” cry the men ; they are right.

Lord Cardigan, who led an advanced guard of three hundred Dragoons, and a Horse Artillery gun or two, was exchanging the first compliments of the season with the enemy's field-pieces. On the Russians showing a considerable body of horse, our fellows, although “itching to be at 'em,” very properly fell back, and thus, the affair began and ended with the giving of a few six-pounder, and the taking of some nine-pounder shots, very creditably despatched on both sides ; the result being that we lost five horses killed, and two Hussars badly wounded ; our opponents doubtless having to deplore about the same number of men and horses *hors de combat*.

No sooner was the battalion “dismissed,” than the servants set about kindling fires, and we—the six jolly companions who, every night of that eventful march, lay side by side on mother earth—searched about for materials wherewith to make our bed. As luck would have it, we found the very things we wanted : some sodden hay for the

couch, and a couple of wooden rails, out of which my ingenious lieutenant, G——, constructed a capital screen, to keep the wind off our heads as we slept.

Although the night was cold and damp enough, its chills and dews made little impression, for all minds were thinking of the morrow. Every soldier *now* knew for certain, that he was within a few hours of a death grapple ; so he prayed silently, but fervently, that he might have strength given him to fight as becomes an Englishman, and that God would watch over the old regiment in the bloody coming time.

I was much struck with an instance of religion in the ranks, which accidentally came to my knowledge on this evening. While hunting for dry sticks amongst some bushes, about two hundred yards from our resting-place, I heard a voice speaking in tones of extraordinary earnestness. I looked and listened, and there, within twenty paces, but far too absorbed to heed my approach, his clasped hands stretched towards heaven, intense emotion ennobling his hard sun-burnt features, knelt a private soldier pouring forth prayer. He asked forgiveness for his sins, through the atonement of the Redeemer ; he implored the Almighty protection in the impending strife, for the sake of his wife and children, left behind, in England ; he entreated the Divine blessing on every officer, non-commissioned officer and private of his battalion—on every living soul in the Allied host.

Seldom has there been an occasion more solemn, never, eloquence more pathetic ; that rapturous disburdening of the pious heart on the eve of Alma, taught a lesson, which must not be forgotten. "Commend me to this dear preacher without orders."

With the first light of the 20th the soldiers were ready for work, but in consequence of an unexplained misunderstanding between Marshal St. Arnaud and Lord Rag-



lan, the armies, (with the exception of Bosquet's corps, which was early *en route*,) did not begin their march much before nine a.m.

The sun rose bright and unclouded, and the air, though hot, was not so sultry as heretofore. Instead of advancing straight to the front, as they had done previously, the Allies, bringing their left shoulders slightly forward, inclined gradually toward the sea-board: the French, on the right, to gain an immediate communication with the ships, the British, on the left, to give the hand directly to the French. Before long this manœuvre was completed. Fleets and armies had united their powers on one glowing focus.

Having arrived within three miles of the Russian position, a halt of an hour was called, during which Englishmen ate hearty meals of cold pork and biscuit, washed down with "goes" of rum, and Frenchmen busied themselves with lighting fires, for the boiling of their habitual coffee.

While the men are dining, let us hastily survey the field of battle. Looking a-head with the coarse imperfect glance of a man standing in the ranks, it seemed that the Russians were posted on a range of hills, which, taking root, so to speak, on the sea-shore, stretches eastward for about five miles, and terminates in a bluff, forming the right of the defence. Upon well-chosen spots of the exterior slopes of the ridge (which is deeply scored with ravines) entrenchments, armed with 24-pounder, and 32-pounder brass guns, had been thrown up, numerous field-batteries of 9-pounder and 32-pounder howitzers being in support. This artillery—in all nearly ninety-six guns, we are told—had been so judiciously distributed, that while attacking troops would have to breast a shower of shot and shell pelting full in their faces, their flanks must wince under an enfilading fire.

Along the northern base of the hills, at a distance

perhaps of four hundred yards, flows the Alma, an insignificant stream, everywhere fordable. Its banks are unequal, averaging on the left (Russian) side, six feet in height, and being, in general, nearly level with the water on the right (Allied) side. Vineyards and orchards fringe both edges of the river, but the right edge alone is studded with houses, which are set wide apart, amid gardens. On the point, where a little bridge conducts the post-road (from Eupatoria to Sevastopol) across the Alma, is clustered a handful of huts, called the village of Bourliouk ; its site being nearly opposite the centre of the Russian position.

It was plain that in most respects the enemy possessed advantages over us. His entire front was covered by a river, he was posted on the summits of rocks, from which the fall to the waters'-edge was broken, and occasionally precipitous. In the nooks and crannies of the cliffs, in the chinks of the ravines, in the vine thickets, his sharpshooters lay hidden—good marksmen, eager to test the bone-fracturing virtues of their boasted Liège rifles ; yet, more, the presence of divers tall poles in particular localities, showed how carefully the Russian Artillerymen had marked the range of their guns—omens of a warm reception for us were those neatly-painted posts.

The situation of the Allies was the converse of all this. Their masses were arrayed on the gently undulating treeless steppe, which, for a considerable distance, shelves gently downward to the Alma ; hence, not the slightest battalion movement escaped the notice of the Muscovite perched on the opposite heights—those hawk-eyed gentry had but to bend their eyes upon us, and they scanned our proceedings as a man scans a map. In the matter of artillery we were—as regards weight of metal, not gunners' skill—inferior to the foe, the British Horse Artillery having only a few 9-pounders, commingled with their pet 6-pounders,

and the field batteries being provided with 9-pounders, and some 24-pounder howitzers. We had fifty-four guns on the field, the French seventy-two guns. The Russian, too, reckoned his Cavalry by thousands; the invaders counting their horse in hundreds.

In what respect, then, were we better off than the enemy: you have enumerated our deficiencies, tell us our superiorities? Well, in the first place, the Allied Infantry was made up of the most admirable materials ever brought together. Can the Zouave be matched for tiger *élan*? What soldier will you pit against the British Grenadier for bull-dog resolution? That Alma Foot was incomparable—the very marrow of the Lion and the Eagle, it could be relied upon to pull their chiefs through even bloodier difficulties than those now staring them in the face. Secondly, the Allied right rested on a powerful fleet, well supplied with heavy mortars.

Marshal St. Arnaud had conceived a plan of attack. It was as follows:—Part of the English were to manœuvre against the enemy's right—with the object of turning that flank. Bosquet's corps was to engage the enemy's attention on the left. The bulk of the Allies were to force the centre of the Russian position; this plan broke down. Lord Raglan, who, it is alleged, had assented to the project, when first it was proposed to him, hesitated about carrying out his share of the details. Time slipped by, and, in consequence, our operations resolved themselves into the simple head-foremost tactics, characteristic of British generalship.

Noon. The appeal to the God of battles must be made. The power of the west advanced, wearing an aspect so sublime, that beholding the glory thereof, every eye glistened, every heart swelled, every spirit rose high and unconquerable.

The united armies now marched on the same alignment,



the British being "in contiguous double columns, with a front of two divisions." Ahead, were sharpshooters, and the left flank was looked to by riflemen, handled by Major Norcott, (who was commended in that day's despatch as "promising to be a distinguished officer of light troops,") backed by the Cavalry under Lord Lucan.

The order of march, then, may be stated as follows:—

—Rifle Brigade. Rifle Brigade.  
—Light Cavalry—Artillery—Light Division—Artillery—Second Division—Artillery.  
—Artillery—First Division—Artillery—Third Division—Artillery.  
Fourth Division.

On the immediate right of our 2nd division (De Lacy Evans), was the 3rd French division (Prince Napoleon), then the 1st French division (Canrobert). The 2nd French division (Bosquet), supported by the Ottoman troops of Solyman Pasha, were in advance, indeed, already on the point of crossing the Alma—near the junction of that river with the sea—to assail the Russian left.

The French reserve was in charge of a rough African soldier, General Forey; Sir George Cathcart commanded the English reserve.

One o'clock—cannon roar, rifles crack, steamers are belching out a devilish tempest of 10-inch shell; the dogs of war are at it, tooth and nail. "Go it, Zouaves," every lip murmurs, as we see Bosquet's voltigeurs clambering, cat-like, up the steep acclivities near the sea-shore. Here and there, a smitten soldier rolls backward; but the enemy's fire being feeble, the stormers, who work in loose files (skirmishing order), are never checked.

By-and-bye, it becomes plain that the ship mortars are playing a rude game with the Russian left. Much stir and, seemingly, confusion are there. Hurrah! the red-breeched panthers top the hill; the French artillerymen are actually lugging field-pieces up the precipice. Well thought, nobly done! Bosquet's task is fulfilled;—his foot is firm on the summit. He struggles hard now,

beset by masses of the foe. The time has come for the main power of the combined armies to fall to ; not a minute should be lost. At last, the state of things admits of no misunderstanding. The impatiently waited signal is made, and the entire front of the Allies presses forward. At this juncture, the village of Bourliouk bursts into flame ; the Cossacks have fired it.

On our side, the Light Division (Brown) and the Second Division (Evans), having deployed into splendid lines, step steadily towards the river ; the First Division (Duke of Cambridge) supporting the former, the Third Division (England) doing that office by the latter.

We, (First Division) having halted on the extreme verge of the enemy's range, also formed line, (as a matter of precaution,) and then "stood at ease." Thus, for a time, we had nothing to do but to strain anxious eyes on our advancing comrades. Thanks to the exceeding brightness of the day, and to a total absence of wind, which permitted the smoke from the burning hamlet to mount straight into the heavens, the prospect stretched so clearly before us, that few of the proceedings of the gallant "Lights," up to their reaching the water's edge, escaped our attention. Sad to relate, the first overt act of Brown's "lambs" was in defiance of "regulation ;" no sooner were they in good earnest on the road to death or glory, than, with one accord, plucking their forage caps out of the haversacs, they chucked away their detested shakoes ; most of the camp-kettles, too, shared a like fate, so that, in one particular spot, the ground was absolutely strewn with abandoned articles of infantry equipment.

By this time, a tremendous cannonade was pouring on the advancing troops ; hence, red dots began to speckle the plain, and sometimes a great gap was, on a sudden, cut in the unshaken line. And now, the round-shot, its duty done in front, or else having missed aim altogether,



came sneaking towards the supporting divisions with such a gentle glide, that the men could hardly be persuaded to lift a leg, to allow the dying missile to pass unobstructed through their ranks. "Why, Lord love you, sir, it's no more hurtful nor a spent cricket ball," they said; however, after a poor fellow had lost a foot in an attempt to arrest one of these perfidious sliders, the soldiers grew wary. Notwithstanding the awe of the occasion, the antics of a pretty little Maltese terrier, belonging to the jolly drummers of the Coldstreams, drew loud laughs from the light-hearted soldiery. Whenever a ball hopped along the ground with more liveliness than usual, little "Toby," darting from his bed among the drums and fifes, would give tongue in chase as friskily as though he hunted a mouse in the barrack-square of Fort Manöel.

A strange April morning affair is this mind of ours! Smiles amid carnage, tears in the hour of joy! There is a skeleton at all our feasts. Death and jollity clink glasses together.

Our artillery, vigorously manned, lent gallant aid to the assaulting brigades. As the Light Division moved forward, two First Division field-batteries promptly opened fire, to support the rush; but, for some reason or other, they were ordered to the rear of the Guards, after a few rounds. Subsequently, these guns joined the 2nd Division, and did excellent service under the direction of Sir De Lacy Evans, an officer who thoroughly understands how to combine the action of different arms. The 2nd Division were peculiarly fortunate in their General.

Meanwhile, Yea's Fusileers, Blake with "the Duke's Own," Shirley's mad-pated, hot-hearted "Rangers," Old Brown heading them—a braver veteran ne'er drew a sword—are scrambling up the left bank of the Alma; and the 2nd Division (beautifully manœuvred by Evans over very difficult ground,) having pushed through the now

blazing Bourliouk, is struggling up to the arm-pits in water. The iron rain splashes around—a crimson scum floats on the sluggish stream.

On ! on !—smoke, din, slaughter—the men fall fast ; but still the Minié cracks incessantly. Hurrah for the old Fusileers !—well done, 19th !—bravo, 33rd !—a cheer for Sir De Lacy Evans and the “Forties !” On this great day no troops fought stouter than the 2nd Division ; none of ours were so skilfully led—none of ours achieved more brilliant success. But somehow, this corps has not obtained its just proportion of praise.

It is obvious that the “Lights,” albeit heroically contending against the overpowering weight of men and guns which Menschikoff had accumulated on his right, have a duty beyond the strength of their thinned ranks. In fact, Brown’s danger is imminent, Lord Raglan, therefore, orders the Duke of Cambridge to lead the Guards and Highlanders to the relief.\*

Never was the command, “Line will advance,” more gladly received. The three service battalions of Guards—Grenadier, Coldstream, Scots Fusileers—under Major-General Bentinck, have the right of the line ; three regiments of Highlanders—42nd, 79th, and 93rd—led by their old warrior chief, Sir Colin Campbell (who, to the delight of the Gael, donned the tacksman’s bonnet for the occasion), formed the left wing.

At first, our progress was not seriously meddled with ; the Muscovite being busy with Brown and Evans in advance ; but, suddenly—just as we reached the gardens bordering the Alma—a murderous storm of round shot

\* I have reason to believe that two distinct orders to advance reached the First Division almost simultaneously. The one was sent by Lord Raglan ; the other by General Evans, who assumed the responsibility of so acting, in consequence of the very serious aspect of affairs at the time.

and shell broke upon us ; with the view of allowing the first bitterness of the out-burst to expend itself, the troops crouched, for a few moments, behind the embankments of the vineyard, and the blackened ruins of the village ; but the virulence of that diabolic artillery was no short livid spurt ; so, onwards, through thick and thin. Right through the tangled shrubs tear the glorious battalions, they plunge into the river, they sprawl up the steep slippery banks on the other side, they are floundering through another vineyard, interspersed with fruit trees, and intersected with deep dry ditches ; all the while, the air swarms thicker and thicker with projectiles. We are in a very hell, nothing to be heard, save the humming of shells, the whiz of round-shot, the rattle of grape and canister. The trees crash, and split around, the ground is torn up under our feet, our comrades are beaten down.

During those terrible moments, the conduct of the soldiers was wonderful ; scarcely a man of them had ever seen a shotted musket fired before, except at a target, and yet, they looked in the conjuncture as cool, as self-possessed, as if "marking time" in an English barrack-yard. Indeed, at this point of our advance, I observed many fellows munching the grapes that hung in clusters on every side. The tumble down of mess-mates only gave rise to the quiet observation, "There goes old Tom," "Our Dick's done for." What a true nobleman does the Briton stand forth, when the tug of war, or adversity comes !

The bearing of the field officers' horses was likewise remarkable. Fright had so effectually tamed their vices and caprices, that, in this danger, they were the most manageable of animals ; for instance, I observed a little fury of a mare notorious for inherent bitterness of temper, following her master (who had dismounted after crossing the river) through all the intricacies of the orchard, with the docility of a pet spaniel.



Presently, the division emerges from the thickets. 'Tis in wild disorder ; but at once the files—without heeding the original “telling off”—fall into line anyhow, with admirable alacrity and intelligence ; and, in a few moments, a firm battle-front again marches in the teeth of the Russian cannon.

Our way lies over the dead and dying of the 7th, 23rd, and 33rd. Piteous murmurs for water or for help, arise from mangled bleeding forms, but we may not notice them. Scattered remnants too of that brilliant light division come rushing through our ranks, but those few officers of theirs, whom the bullet has spared, immediately rally this *debris* in our rear. Confusion can be only momentary with such soldiers ; still it is evident we had not moved too soon.

Cheers, such as British throats alone can send forth, burst from Guards and Highlanders. The game seems in their grip ; the cannons are just ahead, and the fire slackens sensibly ; albeit, it is heavy still, so heavy that dozens of our fellows continue to be struck down, and the centre battalion of the Guards' brigade (which faces a point blank discharge of grape and round shot) is so rudely encountered, that it recoils for an instant—only *pour mieux sauter*. And now, a thick wedge of grey-coated, helmetted foot shows on the slope to the right of the grand battery ; it waits an opportunity of hurling an overwhelming mass upon our thin line.

Another round of deafening cheers, and file firing is commenced right into that close-grained column. Every soldier takes deliberate aim ; the distance does not exceed sixty paces ; hence, the Minié has an easy game, and works miracles.

Here I must mention a bit of battle gossip—highly characteristic of the best soldier of the first division. At one vital juncture, the Guards (the story goes) seemed so

gravely imperilled, that the propriety of falling back was, for a moment, entertained in a very influential divisional quarter ; but, on Sir Colin Campbell—a veteran of unflinching, wrought-iron temper—pointing out, in half-a-dozen vehement words, the disaster which must inevitably follow a retrograde movement, the idea was abandoned. We persisted in looking to our front, and soon went in and won. We may thank Providence for having placed the stubborn old Scot amongst us on the Alma day.\*

To resume—I was talking of the file firing. Well, the rifles had just got steadily into play, when an officer galloped down the rear of the line, shouting "Cease firing, you're firing on the French." A short pause, during which the soldiers grumbled out savagely—"Are we to stand quietly to be knocked on the head, and not to return a shot?" However, the companies' leaders arriving at the conclusion that, inasmuch as our Allies wear neither helmets nor grey watch-coats, ——— must be in error respecting the identity of the corps that peppered us so freely, quickly sung out "Go on with your firing, boys !" Like wild-fire the welcomedirection ran from man to man ; away "pinged" the Minié balls merrily as ever. Here was an infraction of orders, which, as may be supposed, none were called on to answer for.

\* In the journal of Sir Charles Napier appears the following :—  
"Sir Colin Campbell, in my opinion, was the man that decided the battle (of Chillianwallah), when the crisis hung upon the wheeling up the two right companies of the 61st regiment. But for that manœuvre, I do not see how the 61st could have escaped the fate of the 24th regiment. The destruction of the last separated the wings of the army, and the change of front, and advance, made by the 61st and 46th, united them again." *Life of Sir Charles Napier*, Vol. IV., p. 352.

Again, remember Cawnpore. It would seem that Sir Colin Campbell has a special mission—to rectify the misconceptions of less able commanders.



CHARGE! With thrilling hurrahs the line of steel dashes forward. There rides Sir Colin foremost of the plaided ranks ; there are Upton, Paulet, Dawson, Hood, showing the way to the bearskins.

The "Ruskis" await not the shock, they face about, and off at "the double," leaving, on the ground, hundreds of dead and wounded.

Forward ! Friend and foe are trampled on alike ; the very colours of a regiment of Brown's, which had been smashed to bits by the *feu d'enfer*, when closing with its prey, are trodden under foot.

Pell-mell the Grenadiers break into the "big battery," but with the exception of a gun or two, it is empty. And now the summit of the height gleams with British bayonets. Heaven be praised ! The first, second, and light divisions have won the English half of the victory.

"Where's our artillery?" "What a chance," are cries a thousand times repeated. The southern slopes of the blood-stained ridge, and the valley beneath, swarm with retreating masses—some brigades in confusion ; others, in square order, rough customers still. Those infernal guns, too, that have so mauled us, go clattering down the rugged paths at the heels of teams of Cossack horses.

They escape us ! They laugh at our beards !

At last, whipping, spurring, jolting over the carcasses of dead and dying, up gallops a field-battery. How we cheer it ! Open fire ! capital ! Gaps are mowed through the rear guard. Every shot leaves horrid marks ; but for all that, we have missed the chance of doing Menschikoff a crushing hurt. He has gained, aye, and ably gained, too long a start.

The Allies have succeeded at all points. Within four and a half hours, English "pluck," and French dare-devilism have stormed and carried a line of heavily-armed crags ; so strong by nature, so amply provided

with men and metal, as to be deemed well nigh impregnable.

Such (in weak words) was the ever memorable 20th of September, on which, the Russians lost about 5000 hardy soldiers, three guns, a large quantity of muskets, drums, knapsacks, and so forth, besides leaving in our hands many hundred prisoners, among whom were two general officers.

The French returns give three officers killed, fifty-four wounded, 253 non-commissioned officers and soldiers killed, 1,033 wounded. Total, *hors de combat*, 1,343.

The British bled more freely, namely, twenty-six officers, nineteen sergeants, two drummers, 306 rank and file killed. Seventy-three officers, ninety-five sergeants, seventeen drummers, 1,427 rank and file wounded. Total casualties, 1,965.

Total loss of the Allies, 3,308.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE DAY AFTER.

Rummaging the Russian packs—Their contents—Hail fellow, well met—Conversation round the fire—The field of battle—Right through the heart—Russian arms and soldiers—The man's look, and his clothing—The Light Division—The cavalry—To whom belongs the honour of the day?—Burying the dead—*In memoriam*—Sufferings of the wounded—How the surgeons acted—What! bonnets?—A carriage for the Marshal—Literature at the cannon's mouth—Why not follow them up?—Chaplains—Patience of the stricken.

No sooner was the British Grenadier allowed to pile arms, and "fall out," than he acted nobly—worthy of himself. He went mercifully amongst the poor moaning, bleeding Russians (remarkably fine young men, by the bye) giving them drinks of water out of his own scantily filled bottle. Having done thus charitably, the hero proceeded to look after his own interests, to make an inspection, verily, of the cow-hide knapsacks so liberally scattered about; and well pleased was he to find them comfortably furnished. Every "Rooshian kit" contained a long thin roll of black rye bread, carefully enshrined in a canvass envelope, just like a petrified black pudding—prog most uninviting to the eye—a good cotton shirt, a pair of drawers, flannel belt, hold-all, complete "housewife," and some leather for mending boots, &c. But of all the personal property lately appertaining to the enemy, their serviceable Russian leather boots took our men's fancy the

most. In every direction you observed Jack, Tom, and Harry, unceremoniously, but wisely, trying on these excellent moveables, and, as soon as fitted to their liking, flinging away their own used up "bluchers."

While the soldiers were thus profitably employed, the officers shook one another by the hand, with a warmer grasp than they had ever used before—or since, may be—and tender questions passed round, as to the wounded. 'Is old B—— badly hurt?' "Is dear young C—— in danger?" It was a golden hour, as the sun set on our first battle-field! Man actually forgot himself, and yearned toward his fellow; *mirabile dictu*, love and charity were really among us just then.

It was pleasant to listen that night to the talk round the watch fires. The excited soldiers eagerly asked one another "What will they say in England about the battle?" "Nobody could complain as how we haven't done our duty any how." "Shall we get a medal?" And, then, the game cocks would crow of their personal feats. "How the rifles let daylight into that Rooshian column." "How no men in this world could stand up against English and French soldiers." "How poor old Bob got his last fall in that there garden, just as he was a plucking them grapes." But of all the opinions I heard expressed in this homely fashion, the one, most frequently recurred to, was as to the necessity of immediate action—of following Menschikoff at peep-o'-day—of smiting him hip and thigh, before he had time to reform his bruised brigades; in short, of putting a finishing stroke to the work, so well begun, of garnering the harvest our sickles had cut down; strange, that that saying of Napoleon—*Un Général en chef ne doit jamais laisser se reposer ni les vainqueurs ni les vaincus*—should have found unlettered subscribers among the rank and file, at the very time its truth would appear



to have fled the memory of better educated, and more conspicuous personages.

No words of mine can convey an adequate idea of the field of battle, on the morning of the 21st. The slopes, whereon the second and light divisions had breasted an awful fire, and won immortal fame, were literally ploughed up with cannon shot, and sodden with blood. The weltering quick and the mutilated dead, of friend and foe, lay cheek by jowl; here, the headless trunk of what lately was a soldier of our 7th Fusiliers, there, a groaning Russian shot through both thighs; in another place, a horse in his last agony "fretting fetlock deep in gore." While intermixed with corpses, were hundreds of muskets, knapsacks, camp-kettles, helmets, and shakoes; everywhere you heard shrieks, deep moans, scraps of prayers, and the never-ending cry, "Water! water! water!"

Men who had been shot through the heart, remained in the very attitudes in which they received their mortal hurts; thus, you had but to set one corpse on its legs again, to have a statue in clay of a soldier in the act of ramming down a cartridge; another body presented the posture of taking aim, and so on, through all the sections of the platoon exercise. But the most striking of the victims of instantaneous death, which I came across, was a young Russian rifleman—he could not have been more than sixteen years old at the outside—who appeared kneeling amid the havoc, with his hands clasped, and his great glassy blue eyes turned heavenward—the ball must have smitten the lad as he prayed! That rigid form, the sun beaming on its waxy brow, and round about, a ghastly huddle of defaced carcasses, shivered arms, heavy shot, shell-splinters, all smeared with clotted gore, composed a picture that haunted me for many days.

Owing to the skill with which Prince Menschikoff effected an undisturbed retreat, our spoils were not



valuable ; muskets, indeed, he left behind him in plenty, but they were inferior articles of Tula manufacture, having long polished barrels, clumsy but weak locks, and stocks of a common white wood ; the bayonets were shorter than our own, and evidently made of poor stuff ; however, we occasionally picked up an excellent weapon : the Liège rifle, sighted for 12,00 yards, and throwing a very heavy ball. An intelligent armourer pronounced this gun to be of first-rate workmanship from heel to muzzle. There is a capital little apparatus affixed, by a thong, to the stock of every Russian fire-lock, *viz.*, a simple cap of stout leather, to protect the nipple against rain or damp. The sequel will show that we ought to have copied this cheap and most efficacious contrivance, "*Fas est ab hoste doceri.*"

The Muscovite dead were broad-shouldered, sinewy "sword-men," on the average, nearly as tall as Englishmen. Their features seemed to have been cast in one, and that not very attractive, mould. Search where you would, there was ever a stereotyped and ugly uniformity of high cheek-bones, snub noses, elongated upper lips, and cropped poles, fretful, with colourless hair of the coarsest texture. The razor can have no sinecure in their ranks, for, with the exception of a thin, wiry moustache, which, I understand, is protected and fostered by "regulation," not a bristle asserted its natural position on their faces. The Russian soldier's working dress is serviceable ; first of all, he has a light helmet of black leather, the brazen spike of which answers the purpose of a ventilating funnel ; then comes a loose, grey watch-coat (made of stout cloth, not of baize, as with us) ; this sombre garment is particularly convenient ; when on the march, in the fight, &c., its skirts are looped up with hooks and eyes, but at night the reef is shaken out, and the sentinel stands well covered down to his ancles. "Johnny Russ" wears a pair of strong pepper

and salt trowsers; and lastly is admirably shod. Our old "clothing Colonels" would be surprised to see the *bond fide* materials of which his Russian leather boots are built. Of his decent under-clothing, I have spoken already.

Never did soldiers combat more desperately than Brown's soldiers on the Alma. They—together with the 2nd Division—bore the fiercest rage of the fight. By dint of noblest exertions, they forced their way to the very crest of the heights, Bell, of the 23rd, Donovan, of the 33rd, and several privates, actually leaping, over the entrenchments of the great battery, into the midst of the enemy's guns. Yes, Brown had a hand on the enemy's throat; but, in crossing the river, in rushing through the gardens, in dashing up the hill-side, his brigades had been grievously mauled;—they were so faint from loss of blood, aid was so long withheld, that their grasp loosened perforce, and they were pounded well nigh to atoms.

It is almost certain that if the first division had moved to the relief a few minutes sooner, the "Light" would have been enabled to hold their ground, and, thereby, have been foremost, (as they richly deserved to be,) in sweeping the Russians out of their strong place, but as it was, that culminating point of glory was reserved for others. Look at the loss sustained by Brown—twelve officers, ten sergeants, two drummers, one hundred and eighty-three rank and file killed—twenty-nine officers, forty-eight sergeants, twelve drummers, six hundred and eighty-two rank and file wounded; nine rank and file, two drummers missing. Total casualties, nine hundred and eighty-nine. The regiments which suffered most were the 7th, 19th, 23rd (nine officers killed, five officers wounded), and 33rd. Owing to some strange misapprehension of circumstances, the second brigade (Buller) was thrown *into square* under a hot fire of shell and round shot, obviously, a very un-  
uitable formation.

There are people who think our cavalry might have been more enterprising in the course of, and more energetic at the end of, the action, I must dissent from such an opinion. In the first place, it should be borne in mind, that the British Dragoons were but a handful compared with the Russian cavalry. Secondly, that while the fight raged, our squadrons had to watch the movements of a heavy body of Russian horse that threatened our flank. Thirdly, that from first to last, no orders of any kind reached Lord Lucan from the Commander-in-Chief. Lastly, that when, on the retreat of the Russian army, the Lieutenant-General did, on his own responsibility, push his troopers forward, they were un- luckily brought to a stand still, on a narrow *chaussée*, by the break down of a Horse Artillery gun carriage, immediately in their front.

The Alma was a soldier's battle—a direct attack by lines on ordnance defended heights, which Menschikoff (as the officers made prisoners avowed) expected to maintain against all comers for three weeks at least. With the exception of Bosquet's brilliant stroke at the enemy's left, there was but little manœuvring. It was all hammer and tongs; "pluck," perseverance, the Minié, and the *carabine à tige* did the business. Great honour, then, to the ranks of the Allied armies. Great honour to the English "private," and the French *fantassin* who, despite mountains, water, heavy guns, drove forty thousand veterans, like chaff before the wind, in little better than four hours.

But although generally speaking, we may place the glorious result of September 20, 1854, to the credit of the regimental officers and soldiers prominently engaged, it would be unjust to forget the eminently military qualities displayed on this great occasion by two "Pea Generals;" Sir De Lacy Evans, by his masterly the second division, and Colin Campbell

headed resolve at a critical moment, proved how well they, at least, could put in practice the experience acquired under an illustrious Captain. These men are worthy of being trusted with the lives of British soldiers. The *prestige* of Britain would be safe in their keeping.

Towards the afternoon of the 21st, the air gave unpleasant warning as to the advisability of getting the dead under ground ; accordingly fatigue parties were ordered out, and wholesale burying, after rapid campaigning fashion, commenced. First of all we collected the corpses in great heaps of about fifty bodies to each heap—the English by themselves, the *Muscovs* by themselves ; afterwards, pits were dug in convenient situations, and to these pits we consigned the slain, disposing them in layers, one above the other, till the grave could hold no more ; then, a few shovel's full of earth, and all was over. On the spot where it had fallen, there the noble tree lay for ever.

Of the officers killed, none had more sincere mourners than Captain Cust, Coldstream Guards, A.D.C. to General Bentinck. He expired immediately after the amputation of the thigh on the evening of the 20th. Cust was no common man, he had all the attributes of a good soldier. He was acute, energetic, and of a singularly bold, independent spirit. He abhorred meanness and chicanery. His manly nature ever impelled him to side with the weak against the strong. He was a frank enemy, as a friend he was true as steel. His charity was liberal and unostentatious. Is it wonderful that Horace Cust's memory should be dear?

“Farewell too little and too lately known,  
Whom I began to think and call my own.”

In consequence of the shameful penury of the hospital arrangements, most of our poor bleeding fellows lay throughout the night of the fight on the ground just as

they had dropped, and many, I fear, were not satisfactorily cared for before the morning of the 22nd. It was piteous to see a few clumsy *arabas* jolting towards the beach, crammed with arm-less, leg-less men, fresh from the surgeon's knife. It harrowed one's heart to listen to the cries and moans issuing from those unhappy loads. The French being decently provided with orthodox ambulance waggons, mule-litters, and a *service* of hospital-orderlies, tended their casualties in a manner more consistent with humanity.

It is not to be inferred, from what has been said above, that the unprecedented misery endured by our sick and wounded, is, in any degree, chargeable on the working surgeons of the army: far from it; as a body those officers behaved admirably; they were indefatigable in the doing of their melancholy functions; they were the first to cry shame on the highly-placed inexperience, and want of foresight which too often neutralized their best endeavours. Without assistance, beyond that desultory make-shift sort of assistance, derivable from the infirm contingent of aged pensioners, and some dozens of band-boys, it is surprising how much the "sawbones" did, and how well they did it.

An extraordinary memorandum against the use of chloroform in surgical operations, appeared for the occasion, from the pen of Inspector of Hospitals, Hall; it is agreeable, however, to believe, that the objections of the principal medical officer of the army had not the effect of deterring many of our practitioners from the use of the most salutary discovery of modern times. Humanity *in extremis* had the boldness to disobey orders: even "O.H.M.S."

On two or three conspicuous points of, what so lately had been, the Russian position stood lofty wooden platforms. At first, there was some difference of opinion as



to the object of these "grand-stands," but, at length, it was suggested that they might have been erected for the convenience of the Muscovite *belles*, whom the gallant Menschikoff (if the prisoners' tales be true) had invited from Sevastopol to witness the annihilation of the western host. The discovery of a number of pretty Parisian bonnets, elegantly be-ribboned and be-flowered, in an out-house close to the battle-field, lent colour to the hypothesis.

The Zouaves presented their sick Marshal with a timely gift. While occupied, after their custom, on the evening of the 20th, in investigating the resources of the village of Almalanak, these sharp-scented foragers lit on the travelling carriage of Prince Menschikoff—"the very thing for M. le Maréchal"—so the Zou-Zous, harnessing themselves to the pole, dragged the vehicle to the Quartier Générale tent; there, the God-send underwent a search at the hands of General Martimprey, Chief of the Staff, who discovered, it is said, among other papers stowed away in a secret drawer, a series of "returns" relative to the strength, &c. of the Allies: the work doubtless of the discerning Greeks, who were continually dodging about our camp at Varna.

In this fight on the Alma, Captain Pen did duty under fire, as well as Captain Plume. Seldom, I suspect, has our literature been so sturdily represented "before the enemy," as in the persons of Mr. Layard, Mr. Kinglake (Eöthen), Mr. Delane, and of our public-spirited "correspondents," Messrs. Russell, Wood, and Crowe. All men of mark—men, who had eyes to see, and minds to judge; men, of whom it is not too much to say that they were benefactors to the army at large.

The great general never contents himself with the venerated lustre of unsubstantial glory—to beat his antagonist is not enough for him; the foe must be routed; to this end he redoubles his blows on the backs of the

fleeing battalions, he permits to them no breathing time, he hovers continually on their flanks and rear ; thus, is a retreating army converted into a rabble, driven here, there, and everywhere ; thus, do parks of artillery, *fourgons* of ammunition, waggons of food and stores, drop into the conqueror's hands. Unfortunately, the allied chiefs did nothing of this sort. Satisfied with the brilliant feat of arms effected by their matchless troops, and forgetful of the precepts of Napoleon, and the Arch-Duke Charles, our commanders pulled up in mid-career ; hence, a golden opportunity of crippling the Russian slipped through their relaxed fingers.

Why Menschikoff was not followed up on the morning or noon, at latest, of the 21st, is a mystery. With the exception of the light division and a brigade of the second, neither our own nor the French forces had suffered very materially ; the troops too were in highest spirits, and, from the colonel down to the fifer, cried aloud for marching orders. Some declared the illness of St. Arnaud, unquestionably a bold and enterprising soldier, to be the cause of our inertness. Others attributed the halt to a merciful regard for the sick and wounded. Now, we are at this moment without means of judging whether the former opinion be correct or no ; but surely we ought not to think so poorly of our superiors, as to believe them to have been paralyzed by the motive set forth in the second supposition. Does not history teach rapidity of movement in war to be the mainspring of ultimate triumph ? For example, look at that immortal campaign of 1796, which annihilated five armies, and wrested from Austria the humiliating peace of Campo Formio. To what are we to attribute such astonishing results, except to genius and to activity, without a pause ? Had Napoleon tarried three days on the bloody field of Montenotte, what must have

happened? Why, his little army would have been crushed by the vast masses converging upon it from all sides.\* France would have been invaded. The tricolor of the Republic would have been trampled under the abhorred German hoof. Take the same conqueror's marvellous campaign of 1814. Contrast his unvarying success with the uniform failure of his lieutenants. Consider how he overcame everywhere, while they were beaten everywhere. But why pursue the subject further? no one denies that audacity, promptitude, and brains, usually carry the day, even against odds.

"Then you are for abandoning the wounded to their fate, for leaving the dead to bury the dead," some may exclaim. God forbid! The fruits of victory might have been plucked without recourse to the cruel alternative of neglecting the victims of the strife. A few seamen and marines from the fleet, together with the battered Light Division could have put the dead decently out of sight, tended the hurt, and placed them on ship-board, while the mass of the Anglo-French hunted Menschikoff.

Could the secret history of the Russian war be told, it is likely we might trace this deplorable sluggishness to one of three causes—(to all three conjointly it may be).

1. Want of *coup d'œil* in the Generals-in-Chief.
2. Unreasoning depreciation of Russian valour, capacity, and resources.

\* "Sans un coup décisif sur les deux armées, le fruit de la victoire de Montenotte était perdu : dès le lendemain l'action s'engage, La Harpe et Masséna enfoncent les Autrichiens à Dègo, tandis qu' Augereau pénètre avec impétuosité dans les gorges de Millesimo ; il sépare le brave Provéra, qui les défend, de l'armée Piémontaise, le refoule dans un château fort où après une attaque furieuse de deux jours, il le force à déposer les armes avec quinze cent hommes ; le défilé est emporté. L'armée Autrichienne était déjà en fuite sur la route de Milan ; les Piémontais se retirent sur Mondovi."—*Bonnechose. Hist de France.*

## 3. The benumbing influence of a divided command. \*

On the evening of the 22nd, two good clergymen were laid below the sod: the Reverends Mockler and Sheehan, the first a Protestant, the second a Catholic chaplain. After the apostolic manner, these worthy priests had followed the army on foot, bearing on their backs whatever of food and raiment they needed. Scorning weakness, fighting against fever, they had gone on praying with, and comforting, the wounded, up to the hour almost, when their own souls were called to heaven; many tears dropped on the graves of these martyrs to religious duty.

Of the sweet patience and noble resignation evinced by the wounded, both divines and doctors gave many touching instances. One of the surgeons told me that having warned, as delicately as he could, a patient, whose ankle had been shattered by a rifle ball, to make up his mind to the loss of the limb, the poor fellow meekly answered, "To be sure, sir, I've nothing to complain of, many's the man in our company worse off than I be; I humbly thank the Lord for sparing my life this glorious day." An Irish corporal, belonging, I think, to the Second Division, being desired to prepare for the amputation of an arm, was heard soliloquizing in this serio-comic strain, "Faix! it's a pity to go back to Tip'rarry in that form, but niver mind, I've some consolation any way. I shot an officer, and by japers, I'm thinking he was a gineral." No man knows the metal of which the "lower classes" of Englishmen are made, till he has seen the rich ore tested in the flaming furnace of danger, privation, and disease.

\* "Rien n'est plus important à la guerre que l'unité dans le commandement; aussi, quand on ne fait la guerre que contre une seule puissance, il ne faut avoir qu'une seule armée, n'agissant que sur une seule ligne, et conduite par un seul chef."—*Napoléon*.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE KATCHA AND THE BELBEC.

Hurrah, Frenchy!—Dress of our allies—True heroism—"Quick march," at last—The Katcha—Nature prodigal—Great mens' houses—Bathing *en masse*—Devastation—A street view—Rude visitors—News of the enemy—Scots Greys and 57th Regiment join—A-foot again—Oh! for a drink of water!—Sir Colin's courtesy—Across the Belbec—Close quarters.

Not before the morning of the 23rd did we push forward. As with "packs on" we lounged about the bivouac-ground, impatiently awaiting the familiar command "Fall in!" a French brigade passed our front. With

"The double, double, double, beat  
Of the valour-giving drum,"

on came the sturdy little Red-legs, striding away at a tremendous pace; each battalion being followed by its nut-brown, lithesome Vivandière, and a handsome complement of hospital mules and orderlies. Of course, we welcomed our comrades (I pray to God this great alliance may endure for ever) with a flourish of bearskins and of bonnets, and repeated rounds of our liveliest cheers, to which Johnny *Crapaud* replied with shrill cries of "*Vivent les Anglais! Vivent les Montagnards!*" One



could not help (contrasting, rather enviously I fear,) the jovial, unconstrained swagger of the burdenless French officers, with the slouching, undignified appearance cut by our weight-carrying captains and subalterns.

It may be remarked here, that the French foot-soldier, when accoutred for the road, has an easier, more comfortable look than our Grenadier "in marching-order." The *kepi* (forage-cap) is probably the most convenient military head-dress ever devised. The loose great-coat, with its skirts doubled back, for the purpose of allowing freer play to the wearer's legs, must, as a working garment, be preferable to the tight coatee; and the ample *pantalons garances* are decidedly cut on a better principle, as regards duration, than the close, ill-fitting, knee-clipping trowsers *à l'Anglaise*; the almost Turkish voluminousness of cloth about the thigh and calf, which Gaulish legislation prescribes, being obviously commodious to a man frequently called upon to scramble up and "double" down steep and rugged paths. The short leathern gaiter, I cannot help thinking, is a useful adjunct to the "service kit," because the "*Fantassin en route*" tucks the ends of his trowsers therein, and thus gets rid of the heavy flopping of wet, miry cloth about his ankles, an annoyance hardly to be despised, if the journey last through many successive hours; the dodge, too, has an economic bearing, for what woollen fabric will stand daily soakings in the mud? *Jean's* boots are stout, roomy, and carefully kept in repair. And the stuff out of which his uniform is made is much superior to the spongey, ephemeral serge in which Contract and Routine rig out his lusty neighbour—John.

Having allowed our drumming, bugling companions a quarter of a mile's start, we set forth. At first, the road lay amongst the twisting spurs of the Alma range, and through an atmosphere tainted somewhat with the rotting

carcasses of the Russian men and horses that had "fallen out," through wounds or disease, during the retreat; but in half an hour we were clear of the hills, and again treading the rolling steppe. As the columns marched away from the festering field, many an anxious thought reverted to two bold Englishmen—master and man—who had volunteered to remain behind the army for the humane purpose of assuaging the miseries of the many hundred wounded Russians that, with hastily-dressed gashes, still cumbered the ground they had made sloppy with their blood. Among the feats of individual heroism which reflected glory on the Crimean campaign, this noble, self-sacrificing act of Dr. Tompson (44th Regiment), and of his soldier-servant, stands pre-eminent; unaided, amid pestilence, agony, and death, surrounded with unspeakable woe, watched for by cut-throat Cossacks—who know not mercy, when a watch or purse of gold pieces is concerned—these intrepid men worked out their sublime—their self-imposed duty. Neither Dr. Tompson nor his servant were spared to reap the rewards, with which the Horse Guards might possibly have been induced to recognise deserts so extraordinary. Both died of cholera a few days after rejoining their regiment before Sevastopol. It only remains for us to bless their memory.

About noon we gained the Katcha—a stream of much the same pretension as the Alma. Nowhere a living sign of the enemy, whom some of our critics expected to find in array on this strong position. The wooden bridge was not broken down; how considerate of Menschikoff.

Having crossed the water, the army ascended some high ground (recently occupied by a Russian corps, if one might judge from certain distasteful relics of *genus homo*), and established itself there. As soon as we had selected our sleeping-places—rather a difficult matter, owing to the mentoes alluded to—given the servants their simple orders,

and sent out "fatigue-men" to search for fuel, and—those uncommon treats—hay and straw, parties of us strolled toward the river.

The prospect which now met our eyes was a refreshing one. The left bank of the Katcha wantons in profusest vegetation; it rejoices in blushing vineyards—a pretty raid the red coats made on the luscious produce—orchards bending under the russet weight of apples, pears, and apricots; gardens prolific in potatoes, cabbages, artichokes, and the like; how our mouths, dry from salt pork, began to water at the mealy aspect of the juicy esculents! There is a pretty village, too, utterly deserted, alas! not a living creature visible, except here and there a patriarchal cock, or an aged and patriot tom-cat sticking to his Lares and Penates, in defiance of both Cossack and Briton. There are farm-yards richly furnished with stacks of hay, straw, and corn—good news for man and beast, we shall lie on cozy shake-downs to-night, and the troop horses shall feed, as they have not fed since the day, the evil day, they quitted their English stables. But this favoured bank of the Katcha is not merely the abiding place of vulgar plenty; it is also a rural retreat much affected by Muscovite fashionables. Look around, and you see the choicest sites of the lovely prospect, occupied by the villas of powerful nobles and of rich employés. In that bright glade the mild Woronzow may have meditated the beneficent schemes which have made his name illustrious. On yonder lawn, perchance, the war-worn Paskiévitsh has lolled with vest unbuttoned and cigar in mouth. It was in one of the most inviting of these beautiful retreats that Lord Raglan and staff made themselves "at home."

Having thrown a hasty glance over the landscape, D—and myself walked down to the river's side, intending to bathe; but we soon found such wholesome recreation to be



difficult of attainment. Public feeling had declared in favour of the bath with such extraordinary unanimity, that the little stream was absolutely alive with dirty sons of Mars, washing off the stains of travel and of battle. We determined, therefore, to seek more privacy—or, at least, freer elbow room—farther from the camp. In the course of the walk we passed through “poor Auburn, (lately) loveliest village of the plain,” but now a dismal picture of waste and ruin, hardly to be conceived by those who are unfamiliar with war, and its inevitable havoc, terror and desolation. Of the white-washed cottages, the most you could say was, that the outside walls remained standing. Within, reigned hideous breakage; doors had been wrenched from their hinges to serve for firewood; floors were stained red with the wine that had gushed from casks, broached *à la militaire* with the butt of a musket, or a pioneer’s axe; furniture, bedding, linen, pots and pans, all irreparably damaged, lay tumbled about in fantastic confusion. The shame of these domestic harms belongs principally to the retreating Cossacks: we did but put a finishing touch or two to their trespasses.

In the farm-yards goodly hay-ricks disappeared fast, for the dragoons were hard at work on behalf of the horses, and the foot-soldiers were busy too, being naturally minded to lie soft and warm for one night at least.

It was very diverting to watch the crowd that swarmed in the little street. Here, we had an “honourable and gallant M.P.,” portentously bearded, and so besmirched as to his comely features, that the acute porter of the “Rag” might have failed to recognise him. Then, passed in review before us a big-knee’d red-headed “laddie,” bending under a huge basketful of *kail* destined for the use of the mess (the sly bottle peeping out of his haversac, being for private consumption, I’ll be bound); a broth of a boy of the “ould Rangers” shouldering a vast feather-bed,—the

flea-bitten birth and death-place of many generations doubtless; a Zouave—always visible wherever fighting or plunder are to be had—with a slaughtered kid dangling under one arm, and an inlaid work-box secured under t'other; a brace of Ensigns (whose tanned and fluffy countenances, greasy old travelling caps, ungirt loins, tucked-up trowsers, and muddy boots *à la* "Navy" are destructive of boarding-school ideas about "the pomp and circumstance" with which the *Jeune et brave Dunois* of the present day hies him to combat,) loaded with an innocent booty of grapes and Jerusalem artichokes; and lastly a "fatigue party" of the "Queen's Own," hurrying homeward with a miscellaneous collection of chairs, benches, bed-posts—in fact, legs and wings of all kinds of domestic furniture—"just to keep up a bit of a blaze till the company fall in to-morrow, yer honour," the corporal in command informed me.

Continuing our ramble, we arrived at a gentleman's seat, pleasantly embowered in shrubberies and gardens, for all the world, like a Twickenham cottage *ornée*, entering in, we found the room chock full of English, French, and Turkish soldiers, who, disappointed in the expectation of finding money or silver spoons, (those convenient moveables having probably accompanied the rightful owners in their flight, or gone to swell Cossack saddle-bags) were playing the deuce with everything that fell in their way. One stupid fellow amused himself with smashing a handsome pier-glass with a poker; another stabbed away at the silken window curtains with his bayonet; a third danced an Irish jig upon the grand piano-forte; a fourth, merciless Visigoth, was elaborately expunging the Calmuck eyes and noses of the stolid family portraits.

It was easy to see that of the military cracksmen present, the French went most methodically to work, for while the bold, but unwise Briton wasted his time in noisy, unprofi-



table demolition, the *rusé* Gaul poked stealthily about, prying into holes and corners, scrutinizing the recesses of dark cupboards, raking in dust heaps, diving into the fetid gloom of cellars, and fuel stores. Nor is it likely such industry went unrewarded,

Towards evening, a few of the poor ruined Tatars came slinking back to their blasted habitations ; they gave deplorable instances of the cruel wrongs they had endured at the hands of the Cossacks, and, what I fear was more interesting to us, declared that Menchikoff's army reached the Katcha, on the night of the fight, in a state of much disorder, and that those heavy field-pieces, which had put so deep a mark on some of our battalions, rumbled out of this very village but four hours previous to our entering it. Why did we go to sleep the moment we ought to have been marching and striking ?

"Time loosely spent will not again be won."

I believe the most reliable information, relative to the route taken by the enemy after quitting the Katcha, to have been ferretted out by the *Tirailleurs Algériens*, or Arab Zouaves, whose detective abilities are said to be very remarkable. According to the crafty "Turcos," the mass of the Russian army had gone eastward, as though making for Batchi Serai, while a small corps alone continued to retreat on Sevastopol.

As I was mounting a picquet at dusk over the wooden bridge, which the Russians had omitted to break down, the 57th regiment (just debarked at the river's mouth, and last from home) marched up. The "Old Die-Hards"—a tighter lot of Irish boys I never set eyes on—were *en passant* profuse in warm-hearted felicitations about the "great day," and loud in lamentation because they had missed its "blood and thunder." About ten p.m., further assistance turned up in the burly shape of the Scots Greys,

also fresh from English quarters. It was quite melancholy to hear the spick and span "Heavies" riding about in the dusk, seeking rest and finding none—such an unpleasant start in campaigning! however, they might have been worse off, for the night was dry (as far as regards rain), and my men pointed out where hay and water could be procured. I'll warrant those gallant Greys have passed many more woeful nights since.

Like ourselves, the French here received reinforcements, to the extent, it is said, of five thousand men.

Early next morning we were moving on the river Belbec; the fleet, as before, sailing abreast of the armies. For the first two hours we had pretty good walking over the steppe, but afterwards the face of the country began to change; patches of mimosa scrub showed themselves, and here and there, you remarked huge boulders of chalk. It was clear that we had nearly done with the arid aromatic plains of the Cimmerian north, and were about to be introduced to the mountains, valleys, and foliage of the softer south.

The day being extremely hot and dusty, the men, generally, suffered more than on any previous occasion, and whenever we halted, those foolish fellows who had neglected to fill their bottles before starting, might have been heard eagerly offering rations of tea, "goes" of rum, anything, indeed, that their haversacs contained, in exchange for a thimbleful of water. Here was a practical lesson in political economy: chapter—Value.

By the bye, can Horse Guards ingenuity provide the soldier with no handier vessel for containing water, than the clumsy little blue barrel, which, as an article of military equipment, dates anterior to Blenheim and Malplaquet, I believe. The French *bidon*, made of zinc, covered with felt and slightly curved, or hollowed on its inner side, so as to sit easily on the man's hip, is a far preferable invention;

even the Russian bottle of block tin, the stopper of which serves the purpose of a drinking cup, must be deemed an advance on the rude keg "served out" to the Englishman.

"But this cask of ours is old, it has done duty in the Peninsula, at the Cape, in the Crimea; these are glorious associations, and so 'my lords' have decided on allowing it to remain the receptacle from which future generations of thirsty 'rank and file' are to suck refreshing draughts," will answer the Barnacles, through the congenial medium of some bland and ingenuous under-secretary.

During one of our halts, I witnessed an incident illustrative of the familiar affection subsisting between Sir Colin Campbell, and the men of the Highland Brigade. Riding up to a group of kilted comrades who were regaling themselves with a blast o' the pipe, Sir Colin good-humouredly hailed a grisly grenadier of the "forty-twa's" in some such phrase as this, "I say my man, can you give us a drink?" "That I wull General, war it the last drap betwaxt me and the joodgment," replied honest Sawney, delighted with his chief's notice. It would be well, if officers highly placed, bore continually in mind the fact, that at a very cheap cost to themselves, they have it in their power to diffuse great pleasure amongst their inferiors. A well-natured manner, half-a-dozen cheering words, arouse no skin-deep gratification. They sink to the soldier's heart, they rest there fresh to his dying hour, and even then they perish not, for the expiring veteran wills them as cherished heir-looms to his children, and to his children's children: the story how a great Commander once asked "a drink from grandfather," will be proudly told in some Highland glen, long after the last man of the army of '54 has returned to dust. Of Sir Colin, truly it may be said—

"He is as full of valour, as of kindness,  
"Princely in both—

A Russian corps being posted behind strong entrenchments at the mouth of the Belbec, the allied divisions deflected a little to the left, in order to distance the range of the guns; which movement being successfully executed, we descended some steep chalky cliffs into the valley of the above-named river, a valley of wine and of oil verily—of fresh painted houses, and of snug little farm-steads, of spreading lawns, of orchards, of gardens, and of vineyards,

“A wilderness of sweets, for nature here,  
Wanton'd as in her prime.”

So we congratulated ourselves on a repetition of Katcha Sybaritism, our parched palates revelled by anticipation on grapes and cabbages, our jaded bodies conceived the fond notion of sleeping away aches, sores, and stiffnesses, amid a voluptuous plenteousness of sweet hay; but these bright hopes were destined to be disappointed—no halt was called, we marched on, we crossed the river by a handsome stone bridge, we left behind the milk and honey of the vale, and began to toil up the bush-clad hills that border the left bank of the Belbec. After reaching the summit, it was some time before a place, at all suitable for the bivouac, could be discovered, but, at length, a confined spot, partially bald, was pitched upon. Herein the brigade, its artillery, and ammunition beasts were packed like herrings in a barrel. Personally, the tight fit was of no moment, for every man of us being regularly knocked up, wanted only food and rest, a “tot” of tea, a slice of H. M. pork, a bit of “bacca,” perhaps, and room enough to stretch a pair of aching legs.—what matter if one’s next door neighbours were a nine-pounder and its team! but, in a military sense, this deadlock, this unmanœuvrable disarray of troops, guns, and horses, within rifle shot of the enemy, was at best an unsatisfactory experiment, indeed, it is hardly to be doubted that, had some stealthy light infantry swooped upon us at



midnight, the next morning might have told a tale never to be forgotten ; as it was, the Cossacks were content to reconnoitre the picquets after their vapping, but innocuous fashion, and our military chaos slumbered on with but one momentary interruption : a false alarm, a cry, "Cossacks, Cossacks !" negatived almost as soon as uttered.



## CHAPTER XII.

## THE FLANK MARCH.

March to the southward—Russian ships sunk—Forced march—Taking to the bush—A road, at length—Chances missed by the enemy—"Something to do," the best tonic—Unexpected meeting—Booty—Stores destroyed—Excessive fatigue of the troops—River and rest—Effects of the march—Colonel Cox—Balaclava, its harbour—Attack—Cheap capture—Luncheon—Flight of the inhabitants—Peeps inside—Trophy-hunting—Forage plentiful—Supping luxuriously—French cook *à la militaire*—*In re* cookery—Spirit *versus* sinew—A regular siege, eh!—French and Turks to the front—State of French clothing—Ottoman looks—Oaths out of season—Disease increases—Kamiesch.

The 25th of September is famous in the chronicle of the war for the flank march, by which the Allies turned the northern forts of Sevastopol, and, after seizing Balaclava and Kamiesch, as bases for operations, confronted the southern portion of the celebrated city. The reasons which led the Generals to affect the comparatively open south, in preference to the heavy armed north, are easy to conjecture. Probably our commanders argued thus:—On the north stands a series of mighty fortresses, which challenge a long and bloody siege. On the south is a town all but naked toward the land; within a few miles thereof are the harbours of Balaclava and Kamiesch, so convenient

for the fleets. Most accounts agree in declaring the Russian army to be both few in numbers and low in spirit. Let us avoid, then, the granite brotherhood of the north, and try a *coup de main* on the streets and market-places of the more pacific south: such an enterprise is worth the risk of a march in flank.\*

It was current in the army at the time (with what truth I will not pretend to say) that the semi-circular advance on Balaclava was undertaken at the suggestion of the Engineer-in-chief, Sir John Burgoyne, who had made up his mind (I quote rumour) that a bold assault on the southern quarter of the town could hardly fail of success, *provided* it were done at once—before the enemy (whose obstinate military character he knew) had time to rally, Assuming the correctness of the report referred to, time has certainly borne witness to the sagacity of the veteran's views—would they had been acted on!

We roused up with the dawn, hurried over our tea, and then received orders—"Packs on immediately;" nevertheless the start was, for some reason or other, delayed over and over again, and so the luggage-laden soldiers, expecting every moment to "fall in," were kept cooling their heels, in most uncomfortable idleness, for nearly two hours; hence, many were fatigued before walking a yard—a bad beginning to a forced march.

While lounging about, news reached us that Prince Menschikoff had sunk seven ships of war at the mouth of the Great Harbour of Sevastopol, obviously for the purpose of

\* "Rein n'est plus téméraire et plus contraire aux principes de la guerre, que de faire une marche de flanc devant une armée en position, surtout lorsque cette armée occupe des hauteurs, au pied desquelles on doit défiler."

"Il faut éviter les marches de flanc, et lors-qu'on en fait, il faut les faire les plus courtes possible, et avec une grande rapidité."  
—*Maximes de guerre de Napoléon.*

barring out the Allied fleets; this bold and able scheme seemed rather to stagger the sanguine reasoners, who, ever since the Alma, had gone about prophesying the capitulation of the city.

At half-past eight A.M., quick march! The columns no longer tramped along a beaten track, or over the plain; they plunged at once into a forest. Everybody who has seen "beaters" pushing their way through a thick cover, may form a faint idea of the difficulties which beset, and the obstacles which retarded, our progress. The heat was overpowering—not a breath of air percolated the dense vegetation,

"——— So thick entwin'd  
As one continued brake, the undergrowth  
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd  
All paths of man and beast that pass'd that way."

You scrambled on with arms uplifted to protect the face against the swinging back-handers dealt by the boughs; now, your shakoe was dashed off—now, the briers laid tenacious hold on your haversac, or, on the tails of your coatee. It was as much as you could do to see the soldiers immediately on your right and left. For the time, military order was an impossibility—brigades and regiments got intermixed. Guardsmen, Rifles, Highlanders, straggled blindly forward, all in a ruck. There was much suffering, and some stout soldiers dropped involuntarily to the rear, to be heard of no more.

After dodging about in the wood for better than four hours (with no other guide than a compass looked to by a member of the Quarter-Master General's staff) we suddenly debouched—with what thankfulness—on the road, which had been specially reserved for the cavalry and baggage. It was with no slight ado that the battalions trickled by files through the hocus-pocus of *matériel*, clogging the narrow lane; however, thanks to the activity and intelli-

gence the men always displayed in difficulties, we shot ahead sooner than might have been expected; and, sections being reformed, trudged confidently on.

The enemy lost two grand opportunities of inflicting damage on the Allies; a wary onslaught upon the wedged bivouac of the Belbec could hardly have missed its aim; and, had a daring light corps, under some Muscovite Lecourbe, pressed the flanks or rear, or both, of the disjointed divisions (the right flank *en l'air* towards Sevastopol, which city was occasionally clearly visible) while they floundered amid the thickets, the Anglo-French would have run a serious risk. Fortunately, the Russians were still all abroad; they had not, as yet, recovered their coolness of judgment or audacity of purpose.

The road we now pursued being a sandy tract cut right through the wood, our military position, albeit bettered, continued hazardous; the troops, too, were, by this time, in sad plight—for, besides being wearied and foot-sore, the dust and vertical glare had begotten in them raging thirst, which could not be slaked, the water-bottles being empty long ago, and not the merest dribble of a well being discoverable at any of the halts.

But, as our friend "luck" willed it, the sinking strength of the soldiers received a stimulus at the right moment. On a sudden, the loud report of an explosion, followed by a dense volume of smoke rising from out the trees a little way ahead, startled us into renewed exertion. "There's owld Ruski, yonder!" cry the rank and file. At once the flagging "fours" close up; sergeants are no longer required to reiterate "Keep your places, men." Hunger, thirst, leg-weariness are forgotten; that magic perfume of burnt powder has dissipated every ill. It was wonderful to observe the eager, head-foremost press of the splendid fellows! It was delightful to observe eyes, which a moment ago were dull and glassy, flash flame. It was

curious to note how cautiously the old "fire-eaters" pressed the caps down on the nipples of their trusty Miniès :—

"———Like unback'd colts they pricked their ears,  
Advanc'd their eye-lids, lift'd up their noses,  
As they smelt musick———"

Who says Britons are not a battle-loving people ?

In a few minutes we pour into an open space, which, to our amazement, is cumbered with fifteen or twenty waggons, *minus* horses. Now, the cause of the excitement is explained. It seemed that Lord Raglan, while riding a little ahead of the army, had dropped on the extreme rear of a Russian division marching for Simpheropol ; happily, both parties were equally surprised at this unlooked-for meeting, or it might have gone ill with his lordship. The flustered enemy, ignorant of the dignity of the personage who crossed their path, and fearful lest their progress be hindered, immediately blew up an ammunition tumbril, cut the traces of the beasts that dragged their Commissariat arabas, and made off helter-skelter, but not in time to save their hindmost sections from the grape of a troop of R. H. A., which had galloped up to the assistance of our general and his staff. A good deal of booty, such as silver forks and spoons, smart hussar jackets, rich fur-lined cloaks, became the property of the early birds—the gunners. A carriage (said to have belonged to Prince Menschikoff) was also abandoned in the flight ; in it were found divers stars, crosses, and medals ; a couple of suits of handsome uniform, a dressing-case, a French novel or two, a *liqueur* box, and a portfolio—"of despatches, doubtless !" by no means—of coloured prints, the morality of which will not bear discussion. The staff being foremost on this field, were, I am told, lucky enough to secure a hamper of



"Bordeaux" and several flasks of "Hock." Oh, how a bumper of claret would have laid the dust in the throats of us thirsting foot-men! Of the few prisoners seized by the Scots Greys, the most important was a captain of Artillery, who had been slightly wounded on the Alma. This gentleman was of a turn of mind so social and philosophic, that the officer, who had charge of him for the night, told me "he had seldom fallen in with better company than the Russian bombardier."

Having broken to pieces the captured carts, and destroyed their contents, by strewing the sago, rice, flour, &c., upon the ground, we again set forth—cursing our poverty in horse-flesh, which rendered so desirable a booty unavailable for the use of the troops.

We were now gradually descending into a valley, by a tolerable road, cut out of the steep sides of a huge chalk cliff; here the dust, for abundance and pungency, beat anything of the kind I had ever met with; no wonder people living in the neighbourhood are said to suffer from ophthalmia. For the hundredth time, water was in eager demand—with no supply.

It was dark when we gained the valley, still no halt; come what might, we must struggle on till water is found. The soldiers were now crushed with fatigue, nevertheless few "fell out,"—noble hearts! they stuck to their companies with the leech-like firmness of purpose that, more than all else, has won victory for England.

At eight, p.m., our column was close on the bridge of Thaktir. Thank God! drink at last, this blessed Tchernaiia will give us enough, and to spare. We forced a path through the dragoons, and artillery, neighing horses, and swearing bothered men, that jammed the causeway; we turned sharply to the left, toiled up a hill, roamed hither and thither on the top of it, searching for a site suitable for bivouac, which when hit upon ('twas difficult to dis-

cover "commodious premises" in that pitchy night) every man flung himself on the earth with a thankful prayer, tore off his bundles, and took to his pork and rum with more or less of relish.

All things considered, we of the First Division may reckon ourselves fortunate, for long and trying as our day's work was (thirteen hours afoot) it will not bear comparison with what others underwent—the two rear divisions, for instance, which lay not down before one, a.m. The French too must be pitied: for, marching as they did, in our rear throughout the day, they had no chance of being established in the valley; they were compelled, therefore, to abide the night on the wooded heights near Mackenzie's farm,\* where but two drivelling wells could be scented by the experienced *limiers* of the Arab Zouaves.

Such was the flank march, by which the Allies turned the Star Fort and the Sievarna batteries, rounded the great harbour, grasped Balaclava, and might have entered the southern town of Sevastopol.

The physical effects of the enterprise were felt next morning (26th), in the absence from his usual place of many a well-beloved comrade, and in the groans, the cold sweats, the livid faces indicative of cholera,—pestilence sure to burst out with redoubled malignity whenever the troops were more than ordinarily knocked up.

The journey to Balaclava was short but sad; every step painfully evincing how greatly the strength of the army had been strained by the effort of yesterday. While descending the hill, on which we had spent the night, I counted half-a-dozen men stretched dead by the way-side.

\* "It received this name (Mackenzie's farm) because Admiral Mackenzie, who was commander of the fleet at Sevastopol, towards the end of the last century, established a farm on the summit of this mountain (Kok-agatch)."—SEYMOUR.

Good and faithful servants, you worked on till your hearts broke! About a mile further on, I came up with Colonel Cox, of the Grenadier Guards, looking sick as death; "he was very ill" he told me, "and could walk no longer." I recommended him to take a ride upon a gun which was passing at the moment; he did so, and I really hoped my poor friend was now (to use his own expression) "all right." Alas! he expired that very evening of sheer exhaustion, as, indeed, did many a gallant soldier. The bullet kills hundreds, but disease and the fatigues that hurry at the heels of war destroy thousands.

Happening to be on the rear-guard of the leading division on this occasion, I had a favourable opportunity of noticing the condition of the sick, that in considerable numbers dropped off from the ranks ahead. Some fine fellows lay on the ground, pale and fainting, just able to mutter "water"—inanition was their ailment; others were convulsed, and shrieked in the sudden grasp of cholera. It is curious, that the Highlanders, who, hitherto, had been remarkably exempt from the capricious disease, were now its principal victims—the 79th, a splendid body of young men, being, I think, the most bitterly tormented of all.

After marching about three hours, we reached the outskirts of Kadi-koi, a pleasant village about a mile from Balaclava. Let us take a look at this notorious place before proceeding to lay hands on it.

The harbour of Balaclava has the appearance of being the result of a terrible convulsion of Nature, which, splitting the primeval rock in twain, left a deep rent opening on the sea. This strange chasm, or fissure, is so narrow at its mouth, that two large ships can barely enter it abreast; but, taking a turn eastward, a little further on, it outspreads to a width of nearly twelve hundred feet. Its length may be about a mile; in depth it varies from six to *eighty fathoms*.

The mountains, on either side the harbour, rise like walls, allowing just space enough, by the water's edge, for a road or quay, and a sprinkling of houses; a Genoese castle, half in ruins, tops the eastern height—the western rock remains in unadorned sterility. No mean part has this outlandish port played in the world's history. It was the means of keeping body and soul together in the British army; for centuries it had been resorted to by Greek, Turkish, and Italian merchants; and, more than three thousand years ago, Homer wrote of it thus:—

“ Within a long recess a bay there lies,  
 Edged round with cliffs, high pointing to the skies—  
 The jutting shores that swell on either side  
 Contract its mouth, and break the rushing tide.  
 The eager sailors seize the fair retreat,  
 And bound within the port the crowded fleet:  
 For here retired, the sinking billows sleep,  
 And smiling calmness silver'd o'er the deep.”—  
*Od. ch. x., v. 101. (Pope.)*

Immortal picture! Balaclava is unchangeable—it has the self-same look for Lord Raglan that it had of yore for Ulysses—“The earth abideth for ever.”

As far as we could make out, not a soul stirred, either in the village or on the adjacent hills; it was supposed, therefore, that the advanced guard had nothing to do but to clamber into peaceable possession of the Genoese fort and its dependencies. Not quite. Presently, whiz went a shell (from a steamer, which had pushed into the harbour) plump into the old castle; and before the eye had done winking, the ancient donjon replied with a round shot, which flopped into the mud within twenty paces of Lord Raglan. And now, the ship pitched shell after shell into the ruin, and the Muscovite worked away manfully, but harmlessly, with the only eighteen-pounder in his possession, which looked landward—he could not depress his pieces:



sufficiently to hull the vessels in harbour. Meanwhile, the Rifles climbed the eastern (embattled) height; the 7th and 33rd rushed perspiring up its western neighbour. "In another five minutes the 'sweeps' will be into 'em, 'bayonets fixed.'" "So they will, but no need of cold steel,—for, see, there's the white flag!" Such were the observations current among us soldiers in support.

We judged aright. The Rifles walked composedly into the castle, and eighty of the Greek militia, of Balaclava, headed by a major, delivered themselves prisoners of war. Judging from the poor commandant's account, the "sulphurous roaring," on the Russian side, had been quite *nolens volens*. He declared that, on the first appearance of the British, he had hung out a cambric handkerchief in token of surrender; but no notice being taken of the rag (it was not perceived) and a shell having sung unpleasantly close to his ears, he valorously determined to stand to his guns; however, the increasing fury of the ships' fire, and the advancing clouds of riflemen, suggested the propriety of again trying the effect of the peace-ensign, and having, this time, selected a more demonstrative article of his wardrobe (one of his best linen shirts) to play the outward and visible sign of submission, the device succeeded; hostilities were suspended, and Balaclava became ours—without costing one drop of blood!

As soon as the capture was concluded, the men were allowed to "pile arms" and rest themselves, while their officers went to take a look at Kadi-koi. We found the little street empty, not a cottage occupied, with the exception of a huckster's shop, to which, being her all in this world, a brave old Greek woman clung like grim Death. Some inquisitive foragers having discovered that bread, cheese, and honey were to be obtained here, the place soon abounded with hungry men of valour,



clamouring, in the Saxon tongue, and at the same moment, for every imaginable, and impossible, eatable and drinkable, just as if they had burst into the *Trois Frères!* At first, the good body seemed sorely perplexed, frightened even (as well she might be, seeing the unattractive throng that surrounded her) but, 'ere long, her perturbation subsided—on a copious application to her itching palms of those never-failing sedatives, shillings and sixpences—and she went grinning and chuckling about in the best of humours. No longer *Yok! Yok!* (no, no,) for here she comes with another basket-full of loaves, and a fresh jar of delectable honey. Why one would think that the worthy dame had been dealing with ensigns (having money in their pockets) all her life, she knows their tastes so perfectly. But when does pelf cry "*Open Sesame,*" in vain?

From the interior aspect of Kadi-koi, it was clear that our advent could not have been anticipated. Everything about the houses showed that the inhabitants had taken themselves off with the utmost precipitation. Scarcely a piece of furniture seemed out of its place. In a pretty "villakin," embraced by creeping roses and honeysuckles, I found the drawing-room table garnished with vases of flowers, rolls of crochet-work, a number or two of the "*Illustrated London News,*" and a thumb'd volume of *Les trois Mousquetaires*. In another chamber was a large office-desk, on which pens, sealing-wax, and a half-written letter lay scattered. Entering a decent farm-house my eyes rested on a charming spectacle—a table spread for dinner! A mustard-bedaubed cloth, knives, forks, and tumblers were there; I rushed into the kitchen; alas! other visitors had been beforehand with me: nothing better than goose bones, and a rank smell of Crimean brandy, remained to tell the tale of feasting.

Although comfortable dwellings, like those just referred to,

were rare in Kadi-Koi—which is but a straggling hamlet of vine-dressers' cabins—yet early comers, and persevering searchers make tolerable pickings in the "trophy" line. It would have been well, indeed, had the authorities vigorously checked such "investigations," and *at once*, placed the churches, priests' houses, and other public buildings, under the protection of sergeant's-guards. In the neighbourhood of the village was found an abundance of hay and straw, very neatly stacked; with respect to these tempting ricks we might, perhaps, with ultimate advantage, have been less spendthrift at first; when three thousand miles away from the real base of your operations, it is imprudent to use food and fodder, as though they were inexhaustible, like the widow's cruise. When Lord Raglan rode triumphant into Balaclava, he was met by the few fishers, who cleaved to their nets, with humble imploring for protection, seasoned with seductive offers of keeping the troops supplied with fish; but as it soon transpired that these fellows (being Greeks) were spies to a man, it was deemed prudent to clear them bodily out of their homes; a step which probably "saved our bacon," at the cost of the mackerel.

When we first arrived before Balaclava, the extraordinary richness and fertility of its immediate neighbourhood baffles description. Round about, bloomed forests of orchards, acres of gardens, square miles of vineyards; nor was the quality of the yield inferior to the plenteousness thereof; never have I tasted grapes more luscious, eaten broccoli more succulent, or munched juicier pears, than those which were to be had here by the mere stretching forth of the hand. A strange sight it was, to see the three nations invade the vineyards, to watch hundreds of English, French, Turks, like bulls in a china-shop, smashing and trampling down the plants in their reckless eagerness to wet their parched whistles, and to lubricate their *scurbutic* gums with ambrosial fruit.

Towards evening, the soldiers might have been seen returning to the camp, laden with magnificent specimens of the vegetable kingdom, together with a few goodish looking fowls and geese, and, what was especially gratifying, many of the worthy fellows took pleasure in presenting their officers with the biggest bunch of grapes, or the most exuberant cabbage they had met with in their gleanings. A graceful compliment that told well for both giver and receiver.

All hands enjoyed a really capital supper that night. The "mess," to which I was lucky enough to belong, was positively epicurean; we had the perpetual pork garnished with "greens," a pre-adamite turkey! a scrag of mutton with potatoes!! a bottle of port-wine!!! fruit à discretion, and, positively blue and white crockery, without stint, to eat off!!!! For the unprecedented attraction of this bill of fare, our little party was mainly indebted to the energy and discernment of my valued Lieutenant G—— and the excellent regimental Quarter-Master, than whom, two braver soldiers, two kinder comrades, served not in the British army. They were the Castor and Pollux of the "brigade," and all men whose good opinion was worth the having, loved, respected, ay! what's more, confided in them.

SEP. 27—In the course of a walk to visit the French Fourth Division (Forey), camped at Balaclava, I found the vineyards and gardens, wherever the eye could reach, still swarming with red and blue soldiery; one could not help observing, however, that while the English appeared to stick closest to the fruits, the French were more generally busied in grubbing up potatoes and artichokes; the superior wisdom of which occupation was strikingly manifested on arrival at Forey's "lines." It was a peculiarly interesting hour, for circumfluent sweets indicated the dinners were making ready; a soldier who watched with affectionate solicitude



over a seething flesh-pot, now shaking a pinch of salt therein ; now, cautiously adding a few grains of pepper, and then tasting the precious decoction with a business-like gravity, betokening the real *artiste*, observing the attention with which I marked his operations, politely offered me a spoonful of the *soupe*, and capital it was. Being like most of my nation, a novice in the *cuisine militaire*, I could scarcely bring myself to believe that such savoury food could be manufactured by any amount of address, out of ingredients so simple, and apparently so ungrateful, as a hunch of contract beef, a slice or two of junk, some pounded biscuit, and a handful of pot-herbs. With justifiable pride the martial Ude afterwards exhibited the master-piece of his unassisted skill—a *plat* of spinage, which he was dishing up for “*mon commandant*.”

“O green and glorious, O herbaceous treat,  
’Twould tempt the dying anchorite to eat.”

From us English military cookery gets less attention than it deserves. We acknowledge our worst enemy in war to be DISEASE, because it is notorious that, through that poisonous influence ten soldiers perish for one whom the sword kills ; if, then, we would have our army efficient in the field, we must neglect nothing that can by any possibility bear beneficially on the sanitary condition of the troops. We must be careful to camp them on healthy sites, to have them properly clothed, to keep them as far as practicable out of the sun, wet, and cold ; we must see, too, that their food is wholesome ; but the mere animal goodness of the ration is not enough ; to render it nourishing, digestible, and palatable, something more is requisite—good cookery—which, among our soldiery, is an unknown art ; no matter, how red and juicy may look the rump-steak when cut from the carcass, every toothsome attribute flies before the rude process, the uncultured care-

lessness of the company's cook ; and when the one o'clock drum beats, the hungry "mess" sit down before no incense-exhaling-gravy-pervading animal food, but a sodden, vapid, stringy lump of flesh, unkindly to the eye, without an attraction for the nose, and, in the stomachic furnace, hardly dissoluble. Truly, uneducated cookery is both a social and a public grievance ; it deprives man of much of the enjoyment of eating : this is the social side of the question. It robs him of the major portion of the nourishment deriveable under better conditions from the fresh mutton or beef provided for him ; here is the public and economic rub. As a deficiency of nutriment entails loss of strength, and loss of strength invites disease, and disease impairs the serviceableness of an army, it follows that culinary ignorance (being at the bottom of all these mischiefs) seriously affects the national interests. I cannot doubt the bowel complaints—dysentery, diarrhoea, indigestion—which so raged in the Bulgarian and Crimean camps, to have been generated in a great degree, by partially-cooked or over-cooked victuals, the absence of vegetables and of lime-juice, and the quantity of salt pork habitually consumed.

Experience having demonstrated the importance of this question, and M. Soyer having taught the ease with which the commonest raw materials may be converted into agreeable and nutritious viands, is it too much to ask the Horse Guards to step down into the kitchen, and see that the mystery (for such it is at present) of creating much out of little, be revealed to expectant cooks in all camps, garrisons, and quarters ? The Englishman, we are aware, is not by nature a cooking animal ; it is, therefore, necessary to make him one. The Englishman loves his dinner right well ; it is proper, therefore, that he should know how to dress it. Instruct him in the mode whereby his stews broils, and boils may become appetizing and wholesome, and



you elevate him into a brighter atmosphere, you constitute him a more valuable public servant. Keep his digestion in good working order, and you preserve him from the doctor's list ; in fact, you nail him to his company and the duty roster. Oh, that we could hear British soldiers unctuously moralizing, with Beaumont's Lazzarillo, over their dinners, "What an excellent thing did God bestow upon man when he did give him a good stomach !"

Bad news Marshal Saint-Arnaud is dying ; for months past a dreadful malady has preyed on his delicate frame ; but now, cholera having supervened, the surgeons dare not to hope. The Marshal has surrendered his great charge to General Canrobert, and sailed for Constantinople—to reach it a corpse. The triumph of mind over matter has seldom been more grandly illustrated than in the instance of M. de Saint-Arnaud. He was a man of an heroic nature ; ceaseless torment might torture the poor perishing body, but it had no power to damp the ardour of the unconquerable soul. Mark this fierce soldier in Bulgaria, he is everywhere, reviewing troops, visiting hospitals, inspecting camps. See him in the Crimea ; on the dawn of the Alma morning, they lift him pale and wasted into the saddle ; in the evening—his hour of glory—they bear him fainting, through downright bodily weakness, to his simple tent. By the death of this indefatigable captain, France and England were robbed of a commander of surpassing energy and audacity. Had that energy and audacity been spared to the allies, a tremendous game might have been played.

"On service" one soon discovers that the strength of the muscles is far inferior to the strength of the mind. During our march from Old Fort to Balaclava, you sometimes remarked a great hulking fellow, with the shoulders of Atlas, and the calves of a duchess's footman, whiningly bemoaning his hapless fate, and declaring himself power-

less to proceed, because, forsooth, there was a blister on his big toe, or his belts hurt him; here, was a very Hercules to look at, but for all that, "he was no good, he had no heart," as soldiers say. Again, your eye would single out a poor emaciated being, whom you knew to be ailing, to have scarce a grain of physical stamina at the best of times, limping along, in stern silence, under his burthens; there, was a hero indeed, resolved to fall down dead in the ranks sooner than "give in." It was much the same thing with regard to wounds. I have known a big, healthy, hairy "assemblance" of a soldier to retire from the field for the sake of a mere scratch or slight bruise. I have known a pale stripling continue the fight with a rifle ball in his arm. We are fearfully and wonderfully made; no man knows himself, much less his neighbour, till he has been assayed by fire, danger, and difficulty. But, as a general rule, distrust loud talkers, swash-bucklers with long swords, blusterers with many-barrelled pistols. The deeds of such are often in an inverse ratio to the fierceness of their words.

SEP. 29—Troops passive and grape-gorging, with the exception of strong fatigue parties engaged in the slow and laborious office of landing the siege guns from the transports, which now cram the harbour of Balaclava. As hours pass by, men shake their heads, saying—"We are not to assault after all; we are to commence regular operations against the place." What! are we going to do the very thing we marched round from the Belbec expressly not to do? Upon what principle was that flank march undertaken, unless to obviate the necessity of a formal siege at so advanced a period of the year?

The fourth division, which Sir George Cathcart led to the heights over-looking Sevastopol, without so much as halting before Balaclava, have been smartly shelled from the town; this molestation, however, has not deterred our

people from keeping an eye on the Russians, who are working like ants, night and day, at earth works. If we are to credit rumour, Sir George urges an immediate attack, arguing, that we may have a chance now; but that every day—nay, every hour—must diminish the odds in our favour, and augment the strength and resources of the enemy. It seems, indeed, as if this were an occasion for the exercise of those alert tactics—those flashes of war-lightning—with which, in 1796 and 1814, Napoleon overthrew Austrians, Prussians, and Russians, and dazzled the world. It is useless, however, to speculate on what resolution and military talents might effect in our case, because those are endowments on account of which Commanders-in-Chief are not always selected now-a-days.

The transports in harbour are filled from morn till dewy eve with foragers, *i.e.* officers earnestly bargaining with the pursers and stewards for hams, brandy, preserved meats, soap, salt, and jam (the last in immense demand). Naturally enough, these articles obtain fabulous prices, I paid, to-day, 5s. for a small case of hotch-potch, and 1s. 6d. for a little cake of "Brown Windsor;" for certain of the rarer dainties, such as nice Cork salt butter, the competition is hot beyond conception. Gold is freely bid where silver usually suffices, and full-fed skippers chuckle with amazed delight over the reckless dealing of houseless, travel-soiled, pork-eating, British subalterns. I mean not to insinuate that the sellers are extortionate; far from it. The great rates they get for their goods, at this moment, are positively forced upon them by the excess of demand over supply; by the fact of the comestibles, to be disposed of, being few, while the empty bellies, yearning thereunto, are many.

The peace of the valley has fled indeed, and, along with the mild-eyed Angel, have departed beauty and cleanliness; Balaclava, from a neat, cheerful-looking village,



has, thus early, grown (so unscrupulous are the habits of the soldiery in war-time) into a filthy, stinking lane of ruinous cabins; and the once blushing vineyards, the once rosy gardens, which, for the last few days, have refreshed the eyes, and cooled the fevered throats of three armies, are, unmistakeably, on the point of being handed over to Cloacina.

SEPT. 30.—No move. Large parties of the troops still employed in landing huge "granite crushers" in the shape of 64-pounders, and long, vicious Lancasters; from the ponderous 90-pound shot of the latter, great results are anticipated.

About 9, a.m., General Forey's Division and a brigade of the Ottoman Contingent passed our lines, *en route* for the heights before Sevastopol. The bands of the various French regiments played merrily: drums rub-a-dubbing, *clairons* fanfar-ing, just as though the nimble little warriors were marching down the *Rue de Rivoli* to a field-day in the *Champ de Mars*.

One could not fail to be struck with the excellent condition of the clothing of the French troops. The battle and the march seemed hardly to have rubbed the gloss off it. What a contrast to the discoloured, thread-bare, buttonless suits of our fellows! As for the Turks, being in general sinewy and broad-shouldered, they looked like serviceable foot; indeed, I observed one regiment that, for brawn and inches, might challenge comparison with an equal number of British Marines, than whom, it is universally acknowledged, no more weighty infantry ever stood on parade. The Osmanli, too, stepped out freely, and, to all appearance, carried their clumsy knapsacks and ill-fitting accoutrements without distress. Strange to say, their uniforms were nearly new, and great praise is due to the privates for the care bestowed on their old flint muskets; there was a world of polish on

stock and barrel, and every lock, as usual, was carefully protected from damp by an envelope of greased rags. Of the officers, the most one can say is, that, as a body, their "cut" was unprepossessing. On the whole, every unprejudiced person who witnessed the march of these Ottoman battalions, admitted that Mussulman soldiers are no-wise open to the abuse and ridicule so unsparingly showered upon them by their allies.

OCTOBER 1.—A touching sermon on recent events from our chaplain, the Rev. T. Halpin. The hand of God has been heavy on this congregation since the good parson last addressed it in Bulgaria. Death encompasses us round about; we see the strong smitten down in the pride of health; we see the weak miraculously upheld—who's turn next? It does appear, in truth, as though the last three weeks had brought the awful uncertainty of life home to every man; for the soldiers listened to Mr. Halpin's comfortable counsel with a respectful deference I never remarked before.

It may be worth noticing, in this place, that a salutary change in the ordinary habits of the troops dates from the outbreak of cholera, at Gewleckler; before that disastrous visitation, the camps re-echoed, from morning to night, with cursing and swearing; scarce a sentence dropped from the private's lips that was not befouled with blasphemous oaths; in vain the clergy strove to correct the evil, they could gain no ground against this familiar vice. But, suddenly, a ruthless moralist entered the tents; good and bad went down beneath the silent hand of the destroyer, and, for the first time, the men began to ponder over what the clergymen had been telling them about the wickedness and folly of incessant imprecations. Thus it came to pass, that d—— and b—— almost disappeared from the regimental vocabulary.

Cholera again rages, diarrhoea too (its pilot fish) has



considerably increased both in intensity and in generalness. After all, these results are not to be wondered at, considering that the untented troops are exposed to the searching night dews which drench us as thoroughly as rain. Many officers have sickened of late ; this is serious, as certain regiments (having quitted Varna under their proper complement of captains and subalterns) may soon find it no easy matter to show one officer *per* company. May the inconvenience (to use the mildest term) of this short-handedness teach the folly of trying to make peace prescription harmonize with war exigencies.

The French have gotten possession of Cape Chersonese, whereby they are provided with plenty of secure anchorage, and a good landing place for guns, troops, and stores in the Bay of Kamiesch. How fortunate, that our bustling impetuous allies are not doubled up with ourselves in the narrow ditch of Balaclava. One is afraid to think of the disputes, misunderstandings, and confusion, which must have arisen out of such close quarters.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## BEFORE SEVASTOPOL.

On the heights—Aspect of the plateau—Glimpses at Sevastopol—Dangers of curiosity—Requiem—Presentiments—Again, under canvass—Domestic economy—Mars asleep—Everything comes in useful—Loss of Cavalry horses—Jack ashore—Arrangement of French forces—Progress of the Russian defences—"Shall we winter here?"—Russian reconnaissance—Lord Raglan changes his quarters—"What's that firing about?"—Clothes running to seed—Junk and diarrhoea.

On the 2nd of October the First Division, with the exception of the 93rd Highlanders left at Kadi-Koi, to assist in disembarking artillery and its concomitants, reached the heights before Sevastopol, and took up ground near a wind-mill converted by the necessities of war, into a powder-magazine.

So here we are on the famous *plateau* of the Chersonese—a huge rib of lime-stone interposed between Sevastopol and the marshy valley of the Tchernaiia. The profile of this great geological excrescence, (looking towards the town) is broken and grooved with deep ravines, while its eastern side rises out of the valley, sheer and rugged. As the surface of the position inclines gently upward, in the direc-

tion of the city, it follows that our camps are invisible thence, this was an advantage to us, inasmuch as it rendered the aim of the enemy's shells mere guess work. The allied armies extended in a semi-circle from the gorges of Inkermann on the north-east, to the Bay of Streletskaia on the south-west. The English camped on the right (facing the town) the French on the left. An examination of the map will show that this disposition affected the southern portion of Sevastopol *only*; indeed incompletely affected that southern portion—*vide* communication with all parts of the Crimea open to the Russians by road from the head of the Great Harbour—and that the northern fortifications were as entirely beyond our reach, as though they had been twenty miles away. Defensively considered, our position was good: a fair force and a moderate amount of labour might have secured the right, frowning on Inkermann; the rear, overhanging the Tchernaiia, was all but impregnable, owing to the precipitous character of the cliffs; and the left leant on the sea and fleet; more, we had safe anchorage for the transports within an easy distance (about six miles); we had roads to Balaclava and Kamiesch ready made to our hands, so that all required of us was the duty of keeping them in repair, and of strengthening them to the endurance of an unusual traffic, in combination with the heavy rains, which might soon be expected. Taken altogether, the situation, although but ill-adapted to the satisfactory prosecution of a siege, was well fitted to the extraordinary circumstances in which the allies had involved themselves.

Sitting on one of the great boulders so plentifully scattered about, you gaze on a "dismal situation, waste and wild,"—an interesting, albeit, unlovely scene. Everything around is bleak, hard, and literal; no verdure, no foliage refreshes your aching, dust-inflamed eye-balls.

The grass beneath your feet sprouts with difficulty in the thin, unkindly soil ; scant and fuzzy, it looks like mangy hair clinging, from very perverseness, to a dry, scurvy crown. The heavens above are bright, indeed, but with a troubled, fitful, brassy flame. Not a bird is visible ; for as yet we have not withal to tempt the vulture ; in a little while we shall have enough, and to spare, of his society ; still, the stage is not ill-suited to the drama we are preparing to enact on it. There is unity, verily, between this desolateness of Nature, this absence of charm and variety, and the acts,

“ ————Besmeared with blood,  
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears——”

On which we are, body and soul, intent. Away with softness ! all is hardness here ! the earth we tread is unyielding as iron ; our trade is an iron one, let our hearts and resolves be also of iron, yea, of iron, copper-fastened.

On an edge of the heights, directly in front of the Light Division camp, stands a whitewashed cottage, whence is obtained a capital view of the city of Goshen ; let us take a peep thereat—should we be perceived, they will shell us, never mind, the odds are heavy against hits. Noble prospect ! there sparkling in the sun, as a silver flood, appears the arm of the sea that separates the terrible arsenal from the commercial town. Stretching across its mouth, from Fort Alexander to Fort Constantine, you make out the topmasts of the sunken vessels, which have unhinged the go-in-and-win calculations of our admirals. The steep northern shore of this estuary bristles with enormous works,—bastion on bastion, battery on battery, gun-tier upon gun-tier : the citadel, indeed. Now the eye sweeps the southern strand ; it is indented with three large harbours ; first of all (commencing eastward) comes



Careening Bay ; next, Dock-yard Creek ; on the space between these two, have been constructed several imposing ranges of buildings ; namely, barracks, hospitals, and military store-houses. Now for Sevastopol proper. The Sevastopol of the alliance stands proudly on rising ground, intervening between the aforesaid Dock-yard Creek, and the Quarantine Harbour. A fair town with broad and regular streets, tall houses of hewn stone, and many a stately church, theatre, and club-house. A prize worth the blood, the lion and the eagle are ready to pour forth for its possession. Passing over the unmilitary details of the panorama, you find the great southern section of the place (with which we are solely to be concerned) enclosed on three sides (N.E. and W.) by water ; you observe, too, that wherever water is, guns are in hundreds ; it is manifest, therefore, that the safety of Aktiar has been well cared for as regards an attack seaward ; not so, however, on the south, or land side ; there, the only finished fortification consists in the round tower, called Malakoff, covering the S.E., or barrack hospital and warehouse quarter ; and, on the S.W. a loop-holed wall (extending from the harbour to the cemetery,) which shuts in, but can scarcely be said to defend, the fair and luxurious portion of the extraordinary city. But if the Russians have hitherto neglected to secure their land-front, they are now making up for lost time with admirable intelligence and energy ; every point, on which a gun can be laid advantageously, is alive with labourers, under whose hands earth-works arise as if by magic. The Polish deserters (a few only have presented themselves as yet) affirm that burghers, portly and affluent, dig away at the defences with right good will, that even the women volunteer to ply the shovel in the *soi-disant* cause of "God and the Czar."

Although D—— and myself were careful not to expose ourselves more than necessary in taking this rapid and



unsatisfactory survey of Sevastopol, our heads and race-glasses peering over the garden wall, did not escape the searching ken of telescopes in opposition. Just as we were beginning to congratulate ourselves on being too insignificant for attention—too small birds to waste powder on—a little puff of smoke appeared on the top of the white town. "Look out," roared a voice behind us. Instinctively, we threw ourselves, face downwards, under cover of the wall; now, a screaming rush through the air, a ponderous "phud" on the ground, about twenty paces to the rear, a sharp explosion, a crash of stone work, a shower of pebbles about our ears, and a 10-inch shell had burst without hurt, as far as flesh and blood were concerned. After shaking ourselves, to make sure all was right, we returned to the observatory, for the purpose of examining the enemy's proceedings relative to certain frigates, which he seemed to be careening on particular points, so as to sweep the ravines running towards the town; but, hardly were our "glasses" re-focussed, when, bang! and a round shot, striking an adjacent piece of rock at a tangent, bounded into the air, and in its fall just cleared the house. As it was obvious, by this time, that the place would soon be too hot to hold us, we became impressed with the wisdom of the copy-book precept—"Discretion is the better part of valour"—and beat a retreat as quickly as possible.

From the 3rd to the 5th of October there was little done besides moving siege guns up from Balaclava into park, near the light division camp, and storing powder, &c., in the propitious windmill.

That Sevastopol was well supplied with munitions of war, was proved to us thus early, by the constant fire rained from heavy cannon and mortars upon the outskirts of our position; however, the storm howled louder than it bit sharply, for scarcely a scratch came of the thunder. Assuming it were possible to collect them, what a curious

tale would the statistics of "hit and miss," during a siege, unfold! How the popular idea about the destructiveness of "Villainous saltpetre" would be modified.

On the morning of the 4th, an officer of the Coldstream Guards, Captain Jolliffe, died of cholera, after a few hours' agony. Captain Jolliffe was one of those unhappy beings, who felt what is called, a presentiment of approaching death; this mysterious, but not uncommon, feeling, seems to have gotten hold of his mind shortly after our arrival at Varna, for about that time a remarkable change took place in his manner and way of life. From being a more than ordinarily cheerful man, he all at once grew silent, melancholy, and earnestly religious. Poor fellow, sweetly resigned and full of confidence in his Redeemer, he obeyed the last order like a good soldier of Christ. There were moist eyes among us as we stood round our comrade's grave, and more than one rough "private" muttered "God bless him," when the first spade-full of dust fell upon the uncoffined corpse. The Russians paid an unintentional compliment to the departed; for, as the Rev. Mr. Halpin closed the Book a great shot buried itself in the earth a few yards off. A solemn and appropriate Amen to the warrior's career.

Without venturing to enter on the question of the "presentiment," I may mention that, during the earlier portion of the late war, five intimate friends of mine were impressed with an unshakeable persuasion of their impending fate; and the issue proved that they had thought rightly; every one of them perished by the sword or pestilence!

Although the 5th of October passed away unmarked by any deed of arms, it was a day peculiarly interesting to us in a private sense. It shines golden in our note-books, inasmuch as it returned to us our tents, after a separation of nearly three weeks. No man who has not had experience in his own dear person of what it is to

exist continually under heaven's canopy, exposed to all the caprices of a changeful climate, who has not been drenched night after night with Cimmerian dew, who has not had to forget for a season the *feel* of dry boots, and the refreshment of an unclammy shirt, who has not dined and supped for weeks together on flabby pork and sodden biscuit, can form anything like a correct idea of the exuberant joy with which we set about pitching the precious old canvass, how careful we were to plant the pole exactly perpendicular, to stretch the side-lines with precision, to dig a trench round about the foundation. We had learnt the necessity of attending to these cardinal points of camp architecture, in a bitter experience of pole-breakings, rope-snappings, and inundations.

From the fact of our being tented, it must not be concluded that our mode of life, at this time, was at all analogous to the cheerful domestic economies with which Chobham and Aldershot have familiarized Londoners. Let it not be supposed that every officer was the possessor of a bell-tent, furnished with water-proof flooring; an iron bedstead (with its cozy adjuncts), a couple of portmanteaus (crammed with suits upon suits of clothing), rows of boots and shoes of all shapes and strengths, a diminutive toilet-table, tottering under the weight of looking-glass, hair-brushes, and pomatum-pots; an arm-chair and "bath;" in short, an exquisite *multum in parvo*, which ladies, examining on a fine day, would have pronounced "so nice, quite the *beau ideal* of a campaigning residence, positively delicious, *charmant! ravissant!*" It was otherwise with us; within each tent lived five officers, or eighteen soldiers, as the case might be. A bed, or anything akin to it, was nowhere to be seen (I speak, of course, of regimental officers and their concerns), we all lay upon the ground: our heads pillowed, on haversacs, or shakoes, close under the canvass walls; our



feet converging to the centre of attraction—the pole ; thus the circle had the look of a wheel, of which our bodies formed the spokes. Sometimes a whisp of hay or straw intervened between ourselves and the soil, kneaded into paste by the endless exits and entrances of clod-hopping boots ; but, generally, we embraced mother Earth in all her unsophisticated dirt ; indeed, many preferred that naked bosom, cold and oozy as it was, to a dank pallet of filthy vermin-breeding fodder. Round the pole were tied swords, charged revolvers, and rum-flasks, while, pitched about, here and there, might have been espied half-a-dozen bundles (full of pork and biscuit)—a stale newspaper (the only literary food we ever got, or, in truth, had either time or temper for)—a jar of salt butter, and a couple of jam pots : the butter and the currant-jelly being luxuries obtained from some worldly-minded steward at an alarming sacrifice of time and money. It is night, and we are asleep, or inclining so to be, turn therefore the glare of your “bull’s-eye” upon us, and report if the first note of alarm would not find every individual spoke of the living wheel ready to leap up, armed from head to heel. Do you doubt our state of preparation ? Then, draw aside that black muzzled Ajax’s muffling of cloak and blanket (the latter, like the generality of things provided for the soldier by our paternal, red-tape, Government, being a wretched article of the sort, the very thinnest, shortest, and *ergo* cheapest, specimen of Whitney manufacture). Unroll, I say, the colossal mummy—ay, there he lies, begirt in his seedy uniform, an old travelling cap tied under his chin, and his boots (the poor fellow’s feet must get a little rest, they are so tender and swollen from continual marching) stand close at hand, so that they may be pulled on in a trice.

Generally speaking, men can see to much of one another ;



for instance, many friendships have crumbled away under the friction of a summer tour; long visits to country houses have soured the milk of feminine intimacies, not a few; and where are the Nisus and Euryalus whose mutual affection remains ardent after twelvemonths of dreary and perpetual companionship at Templemore or Buttavant? Fortunately, our little society was an exception to the rule that ordinarily governs human intercourse; truly we were brethren in arms. We lived, ate, drank, and slept together without a dispute, almost without a hard word. There was community of goods in that tent, and a kind of patriarchal government of an ultra-democratic complexion; the sole privilege, accorded to the president, or senior officer, being that of choosing the spot, whereon he extended his overspent limbs. To show the importance with which peculiar circumstances invest matters seemingly trivial, I may observe, that the canvass bag, which, on the march, contained the tent-pegs, &c., was deemed a most valuable acquisition by the "smart" fellow who first laid hands on it: it was so comfortable to stow one's feet in, it almost kept them warm.

We have just heard of a serious loss sustained by our cavalry. It appears that two transports, in which the Royal Dragoons and Inniskilliners had been shipped at Varna for Balaclava, fell in with a furious Black Sea gale which raged for nearly forty-eight hours; lashings snapped like pack-thread, horse-boxes were cast loose, horses and mules broke loose on the deck; the deplorable result being, that those fine regiments are less efficient than heretofore by more than 160 horses; somehow the cavalry has been unfortunate all along; it lost many men and chargers in Bulgaria, that celebrated ride to Trajan's wall was a blow to it—*vide* veterinary surgeon's report—and now, the very wind and waves conspire against the noble beasts. Had their ranks been thinned by Muscovite sabres

and pistol balls, on a fair field, our dragoons would have been content—" *c'était la fortune de la guerre*," but, so much disaster without crossing steel, without an opportunity of giving as good as they got—is a painful thought with the brave fellows. However, an immortal day was about to dawn for them, a day, that, trumpet-voiced, shall proclaim to all time, the prowess and devotion of the English Dragoon.

Sir John Burgoyne and General Canrobert having (with good reason) judged it necessary to augment the calibre and number of their siege-artillery, heavy cannon and mortars have been borrowed from the fleets; accordingly, the "blue-jackets" of both nations are now employed in dragging ponderous ship ordnance to "the front." We hear too, that parties of our jolly tars are not only to remain ashore in the capacity of gunners, but are to have a battery to their own cheek. This is good news for Jack, who, since the Alma, has been in a terrible taking, lest the "lobsters" should get a monopoly of the fighting.

The French have made, what promises to be a wise disposition of force. They have divided their army into two bodies, viz., a *corps de siège* under General Forey (3rd and 4th Divisions), which, as its name implies, is "told off" for trench duty exclusively; and a *corps d'observation*, under Bosquet (1st and 2nd Divisions, with a brigade of Turks), which will protect the rear of the besiegers against attack from inland. By this arrangement, much time and labour are likely to be economized. Why did we not do likewise?

OCT. 6.—Walked with a friend towards our right flank, and obtained an excellent view of Sevastopol from the bushy heights overlooking Inkermann. Within the last few days an amazing change has taken place in the aspect of the town. The base of the Great Tower is now "shored up" with earth-works, and defences of similar

construction (some far advanced towards completion) are being thrown up along the entire line—commencing at Careening Bay on the east, and terminating near the Cemetery on the west. Hence, in the course of a week, if not sooner, Sevastopol will have assumed the likeness of a vast entrenched camp. It is evident, too, that the Russian land-batteries will have a powerful auxiliary in the shipping, for several frigates and steamers, artfully moored in nooks of the harbours, not easily accessible to our shot, will certainly throw a damaging vertical fire into our works (whenever such things are in being), indeed the *Vladimir* and "*Twelve Apostles*" (the latter being, we are told, the Christian name of the magnificent three-decker careened in the dock-yard creek) have already given an earnest of their future deeds by dropping some very ugly shells into the more forward of the French and English camps. Between northern and southern Sevastopol a little steamer was plying, as we gazed; and one of the dragoons on vidette informed us that she had been crossing and recrossing the Great Harbour without intermission during the morning, sometimes conveying troops, or at least, men, to the town, sometimes stores, probably ammunition. These are signs which go far to prove that the enemy, instead of being in a swoon, as many would have us think, is an uncommonly busy, cunning fellow, whom it will take a good amount of activity and skill, on our side, to get the better of.

As we were returning from the sight-seeing, Lord Raglan and Sir John Burgoyne, very numerouslly attended, overtook us. They also had been reconnoitring Sevastopol; one of the staff, who was kind enough to pull up for a moment's conversation, observed to my friend that "the place looked so much stronger than had been anticipated, that perhaps we might not take it this winter." Now, although there is no reason for supposing

have been the reflection of a more distinguished official mind, it is nevertheless note-worthy, inasmuch as it exactly coincides with the openly expressed opinions of several able engineers and many well-educated, clear-sighted Line-officers. What the General-in-Chief really thinks on the matter, we, of course, can guess at only through the somewhat opaque medium of his overt acts. Should he entertain the slightest doubt as to the result of our intended bombardment, he will, doubtless, not permit a day to elapse without beginning to put his army in a proper condition for facing the winter's inclemency. But, considering the fallibility of human judgment, at the best, the dilapidation of our clothing, the leakiness of the tents, and the advanced period of the season, it would be prudent were Lord Raglan not to defer precautionary measures against the onslaught of Generals Rain, Frost, and Snow: no matter how great soever may be Head-Quarter confidence in the overwhelming efficacy of our opening fire.

OCT. 9.—The roar of guns, in our rear, set the camp on its legs betimes this morning. It turned out that a reconnoitring party, composed of both cavalry and artillery, had been discovered sneaking about the Tchernaiia valley; for the purpose, it must be presumed, of ascertaining what we were about at Balaclava. The enemy dashed at some look-out men, and took a trooper prisoner; but the remaining dragoons, getting clear away, gave the alarm; whereupon a troop of horse-artillery was quickly on the scene, and peppered no *bona Ruski* so handsomely, that he hastily withdrew, leaving in our hands a half-starved Cossack—a sorry exchange for a British light-cavalry man.

Within the last day or two, Lord Raglan removed his head-quarters from Balaclava (to the north of the



by multiplying stinks and abominations of every human and inhuman sort), to a comfortable farm-house, situated on the extreme left of the English "lines." Being mid-way between the harbour and the Inkermann gorges, and in close neighbourhood to the French *quartier générale*, this site is officially convenient; however, the Balaclava town-house is still retained for his Lordship's possible uses.

This evening a sharp fusillade took place in Sevastopol, and raised a flight of *canards* among ourselves. Some opined that the Russians, having discovered a plot in the Polish regiments, were shooting the traitors (qry.—or patriots?) wholesale; others inclined to the belief that the enemy was merely firing a harmless *feu de joie*, in celebration of the arrival of reinforcements; which, by-the-bye, are credibly reported, not only to have entered the Crimea, but actually to have joined the camp on the Belbec. Oddly enough, this heavy musketry fire within the town has never, as far as I can learn, been accounted for.

Cannon lugging and ammunition storing still the order of the day; and a continuous, but nearly innocuous, pitching of shell, on the suburbs of our foremost camps, is kept up by the careened vessels—bad luck to them.

Gradually, but surely, cold is stealing on us. Every succeeding evening bites with a sharper tooth; but the worst of the matter is, that the disintegration of our garments progresses in an equal ratio with the keenness of the air. The more frigid it gets, the thinner grow thread-bare coatees and trowsers, the wider yawn breaches in rotting high-lows. We pray that Providence will temper the blast to the shorn lamb.

Diarrhœa runs its enervating course through all regimental ranks, and will certainly continue to do so, un-

less vegetables or lime-juice be included in the rations, Without aid from those prophylactics, physic, at best, effects but a very temporary relief. Salt, salt, salt, in perpetuity, is more than a match for opium and aromatic tinctures.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## PICK AND SHOVEL.

A Plea for the spade—Our neglected Education—Russian shells—The first sod upturned—Working parties unmolested—With morning comes fire—Coffee grinders—"Green coffee," and its manufacture—A sad mistake—"Toby" again—"Turn 'out"—Chapman's battery begun—"Right attack," ditto—A meeting in the dark—Sortie, and its objects—Confusion in our trenches—Want of proper arrangements—"Going too far"—Reliefs—Working parties and "coverers"—A miss as good as a mile—To dinner: heads off!—Duties hard, and raiment ragged—Physic falling short—Death of Captain Rowley.

OCTOBER 1. — Employed in the superintendence of a fatigue party, throwing up a breast-work along the edge of the cliffs overlooking the valley of the Tchernaiia. Large bodies of Bosquet's *corps* have been similarly engaged, on their portion of the ground, for some days past, and certainly nothing could be more neatly done than their diggings.

Strange as it may appear to many, English soldiers, (with the exception of the Guards, who are almost entirely village-born, with an infusion of that most magnificent of physical elements—"the navvy,") are, to a certain extent, poor hands with the "pick and shovel," simply because

one-half of the men composing our line regiments are town-bred—lads of the loom and spinning-jenny,—who possibly never set eyes on a ploughed field before they “listed.” For instance, I once observed at Chatham,—where a little instruction in field-works was casually taking-place—a young rifleman, ruefully examining a pickaxe, which had been served out to him. The puzzled cockney turned the tool over and over again, now handling the iron, now fingering the wood thereof, all to no purpose—he could make nothing of it; so, at last, he threw down the mysterious utensil in despair, and, hailing a sapper, who was passing at the moment, piteously inquired, “I say, comrade, what’s this here b——y hugley chap *for*?” “But,” it may be said, “French foot-soldiers are not entirely of the peasant order; nay, in every battalion, you will find plenty of city-men—“*gamins de Paris*,” actors, cooks, cabinet-makers, and so forth; surely, you would not have us believe that such *batteurs du pavé* dig better than the smart youngsters who “take the shilling” in muggy Westminster, or sooty Manchester—Englishmen and Frenchmen, of the town class, being equally unaccustomed to field labour, must be equally unskilful in the use of field implements?” Primarily, of course, the Lyons conscript is as awkward with a spade in his hand as the Halifax recruit; but, set the two men to dig a ditch, *after* both have done six months’ duty, with their respective regiments, and what’s the result? Why, that Achille Strasse gets through a fair stroke of work, while Bill Broad-cloth, with all his zeal, with all his muscular superiority, does next to nothing. It is not difficult to account for this difference. Our allies, conceiving the art of throwing up earth-works, to be nearly as important a branch of the military trade as the act of loading and discharging a musket, train all their young soldiers to



the use of the "pick and shovel."\* Our authorities, on the contrary, not content with ignoring "trenching" as a section of "drill," actually employ civilians, at a heavy cost to the public, to do the necessary digging about our barracks and camps at home. During the late war, at a time when Aldershott plain swarmed with militia-men—most of whom being country clowns, would have been, especially at home with the spade—the Circumlocution Office perversely and extravagantly resorted to civil labour for the drain-cutting and road-making of the encampment. Let us pray that the mild military reform, of which we hear so much (and see so little), may not omit from its programme practical and systematical instruction in field-works for both officers and men, may officially seal a manual exercise for the spade, as well as for the firelock.†

It is not to be inferred from the above remarks that in 1854 our working parties were inefficient. By no means. I believe that the soldiers, in spite of many being raw to the task, laboured satisfactorily in the trenches. But why? Because the army was *then* a veteran army; because the rank and file were *then* old soldiers; active, persevering fellows; able and willing to put their hands to anything; men who could, and did, learn to dig under fire; men who, in the very presence of the enemy, could, and did

\* "The stupendous fortifications surrounding Paris were wholly constructed by military labour. A camp of 30,000 men was formed for the purpose; 20,000 soldiers being, on the average, employed on the works."—M. Michel Chevalier.

† In the Army Estimates for 1857—58 (discussed in the House of Commons, June 5, 1857) appears an entry of £3,000 for draining at Aldershott; another of £1,000 for levelling and graveling the parade, a third of £2,000 for making roads! No wonder Sir John Pakington asked why "this expense of £6,000 could not be avoided by the employment of the soldiery?"

learn how to use the Minié with effect. But, from recruits, or even young soldiers, such achievements are not to be expected. It is cruel, as well as foolish, to call on fledglings to acquire the rudiments of the art of war, with shells splintering about their ears. Schooling should be done at home. In the muddy trench, or on the bloody field, men should only have to apply knowledge gained aforetime.

The more one reflects on the campaign of 1854, the more fervently one thanks God that England at that time possessed an old army. Had it been otherwise—had our troops been raw, and, therefore, without weight to counterpoise administrative short measure, what would have become of us? We owe a heavy debt of gratitude to our veteran rank and file.

The enemy's shell range grows more extended. This evening a thundering fellow exploded amidst the tents of the Light Division, and wounded two men seriously.

OCT. 9.—A great day in the journal of a siege. At last, we have broken ground before the place! The night happening to be clear, and very cold, a good deal of anxiety was felt about the working parties. We feared lest the Russians might either see or hear our men, and, in consequence harass them, ere they had time to fill their gabions—in other words, before they had thrown up (with the aid of gabions) a bank high enough to cover them, as they laboured, from the enemy's "look out." In this instance, however, the icy wind was our friend-in-need; blowing sharply from the N.W., it whirled the clatter of the pickaxes to our rear, instead of to our front; hence, the besieged remained in ignorance of British proceedings, till the work had made considerable progress. This battery, when completed, will mount a Lancaster, and three heavy ship guns, the long range of which, it is hoped, may astonish some of those infernal

shell-giving vessels. Nevertheless, the distance (over 2,000 yards) which our shot must travel before striking anything Russian, will, of course, militate against the destructiveness of the blow.

On their side, the French have been equally successful. Setting to work 1,600 men (divided into two reliefs of 800 each) they have managed to open 1,000 *metres* of trench, within 800 *metres* of the town, without being molested. This immunity from annoyance is the more remarkable; because, on two or three occasions lately, the enemy has manifested a peculiar desire to penetrate the working arrangements of our good friends. This very afternoon, indeed, a strong Russian reconnoitring party exchanged shots with Forey's picquets on the precise ground, so adroitly broken, a few hours afterwards. As soon as dawning day revealed to the townsmen the result of our midnight occupation, a fierce fire burst upon the infant works, which, however, were, by this time, too far advanced to sustain material damage thereby.

OCT. 10.—This morning, a 13-inch shell plumped right into the middle of the Grenadiers' camp, and good humouredly exploded without cracking a shin-bone, or even splitting a tent-peg. The bang was hardly over, before the men scrambled for the pieces. It was to serve as "coffee grinders," that those jagged iron splinters were sought so eagerly. "Coffee grinders!" "What do you mean?" Shortly after the army had become stationary on the heights before Sevastopol, the Commissariat reverted to an arrangement, which, under circumstances widely different, had, for a while, been in force during our sojourn in Bulgaria. Stopping the issue of tea—a ration beyond all others agreeable to the soldiery—the Commissary General gave in lieu thereof the famous, or rather infamous, "green coffee."

A more lamentable blunder has seldom been committed;

never did the manufacture of a raw material commence under greater disadvantages. Consider the facts of the case. The troops abode on a bare plateau; all the fuel, within their reach, consisting of damp sticks, or more properly twigs, and roots grubbed up with extreme difficulty, at an expense of much time. The men were almost constantly on duty in the trenches, on picquets, or dragging guns from Balaclava to the front. Bear also in mind, how every day that passed, multiplied the pressure of work on the soldiers' backs; how every hour diminished the quantity and deteriorated the quality of things combustible. And yet, with this dismal chapter of privation and drudgery open before official eyes, non-commissioned officers and privates were compelled to undertake a cooking operation, demanding for its consummation, two conditions, which, "in the front," were next to impossibilities, *viz.*, leisure and fire-wood. We will now take a look at the process, whereby alone the exhausted sentry, or fatigued man, could obtain—most ironical expression—"a cup of coffee." In the first place, the inverted lid of a camp-kettle is, somehow or other, fixed over an open-air fire, which, it requires no end of "coaxing" to keep alight. Upon this lid the green berries are strewed. They must be turned over and over, continually, with a stick, lest they get charred, and utterly useless. We will now suppose the roasting concluded, with more or less success; the second act is "grinding;"—the cook takes the canvass tent-bag, wraps the fruit therein, and proceeds to smash it with a heavy fragment of shell, or to pound it by rolling a cannon ball to and fro over the bag. Boiling is the third act of the tedious drama, and then comes the piteous *dénouement*—the quaffing of a copper-coloured fluid, nominally coffee, really, about as stimulating as dirty warm water.

How an experienced and painstaking officer like Mr. Filder, with the nakedness of Cimmerian hills staring



him in the face, with the knowledge of the almost incessant toil and hardship, to which, according to the nature of Crimean things, the troops were subjected, could ever have dreamt of coffee, in its raw state, as a ration suitable to the army is passing strange. Where was the necessity for this giving of stones in place of bread? Did not swift steamers lie idle in Balaclava harbour? Could not tea, to any amount, have been procured from England for the soldiers' use? Was not an immense quantity of coffee roasted and ground daily by machinery at Constantinople?

Why the Commander-in-Chief allowed this unfortunate mistake of Mr. Filder to be so long persisted in, we know not. Why the Quartermaster-General did not, at once, insist upon the Commissariat superseding this alimentary abomination with something more seasonable, remains a mystery to outer barbarians beyond the pale of Head-Quarters.

"Oh, but," apologists exclaim, "a dish of coffee is too small a matter to occupy the minds of Generals and Staffs. It is entirely a Commissariat question." To such, it may be replied—Consummate Generals have not judged any point or detail too insignificant for supervision, too mean for consideration, too trifling for amendment. Of the mightiest Captain of modern time—perhaps of all time,—one of the greatest of living historians has written, with reference to the campaign of 1796;—

*"Indigne des désordres de l'administration il (Napoléon) portait un regard sévère sur les moindres détails, vérifiait lui-même la gestion des compagnies, faisait poursuivre les administrateurs infidèles, et les dénonçait impitoyablement."* Yet more. *"Il ne s'en fiait à personne de l'exécution de ses ordres, il voulait tout voir, tout vérifier de ses Yeux, tout animer de sa présence; c'est ainsi qu'une grande âme se communique à une vaste masse, et la remplit de sou feu."* (Thiers—; *"Révolution Française."*)

When personal purity has grown to be a thing of the past—a tradition of soap, hip-bath, towels, and sponge—when, in fact, man, through a combination of nasty circumstances, has relapsed into a state of Nature, returned to the outward semblance of the aboriginal Yahoo, bemired as to his raiment, matted as to his hair and beard, stained and sun-burnt as to his features, the appearance of any creature, or thing, clean, and unspotted, is admired by the frouzy herd as a marvel—as an object of mingled curiosity and veneration. Such were the feelings with which one noted the milk-white dog “Toby,” of whose valiant gambolling at the Alma, I have already spoken. While all else were of the earth, most offensively earthy, he played about, unsmutty, and taintless, sparkling his eye, silky his coat, joyous his shrill bark. For this dainty aspect, the pretty beast was indebted to his owners, the drummers, who, I verily believe, stinted themselves in soap and water, that the little chap might be, as they expressed it, “a credit to the battalion.”

About midnight, the enemy opened a tremendous fire on our position; therefore, the troops “fell in,” so as to be in readiness to repel a sortie, which we, not unnaturally thought, might make a dash under cover of those big salvoes; but nothing of this daring sort was attempted, and, after an hour’s shivering expectancy, we “turned in” once more. The damage done on this occasion consisted of one soldier (of an advanced picquet) killed, and three others badly wounded.

OCT. 11.—This evening the Greenhill battery was begun. It is to form our “left attack,” and, accordingly, will be *en rapport* with the right of the French works. Captain Chapman, a clever engineer, is charged with its construction. The working parties report that they had a very hard night of it, owing to the intense cold and the rocky

nature of the ground turned up. Although a rather heavy fire was directed at the diggers, no great annoyance was experienced from it ; the Russians not having, as yet, got the precise range of the hill.

OCT. 12.—Captain Gordon, R. E., reputed a very able officer, has commenced our "right attack." This work (when completed) will be situated on the crest of an eminence, called "Frenchman's-hill," nearly on a line with Chapman's battery, but separated therefrom by the deep ravine which, beginning near the Fourth Division camp, runs a tortuous course to the head of the dockyard harbour. At the bottom of this gorge is the famous Woronzow road, leading from Kamara, Kadi-koi, and so forth, to topol.

Gordon's labourers opened about 400 yards of trench, and would have made an even better job of it had not a perpetual "row" and excitement been kept up throughout the night. A few sappers, bound for Frenchman's-hill, lost their reckoning (as was easy to do) and, instead of turning into the narrow path, winding up from the ravine to the embryo battery, continued their walk down the road, till, on a sudden, they stumbled upon—nay, almost over—a Russian picquet, nestling under the shelter of a jutting rock. The surprise was equal on both sides. The nimble sappers, of course, went to the right-about, and ran, like deer, towards their own lines. The lumpish *Muscov* scrambled up on their legs, unpiled arms, and cracked half a dozen shots at random. Well, these pops alarmed our picquets, the advanced sentries started to the *qui vive* ; and, according to their wont, the Russian batteries opened a tremendous fire.—"Lie close, sentries ; strain your eyeballs, and profit by the momentary light those lurid flashes afford !" "What do you make out ?" "We see columns marching hitherward." "All right ! we are ready for them !" By this time, the Light Division

and its field-batteries were in hand, and presently, our grape was pelting like a hailstorm in the direction of our intending visitors. Thus the affair ended. The enemy, finding we were prepared, recalled his troops, and, by degrees, slackened fire. It may be that that encounter of bewildered sappers and the drowsy Russian outpost, by arousing the attention of our people, had no inconsiderable share in disconcerting the assault upon our nascent works.

In such matters, secrecy and rapidity are everything. If a sortie, covered by the howling wind and driving rain of a tempestuous night, or by the pounding of a powerful artillery, contrive to leave the place unperceived by the besiegers, and, taking advantage of the ups and downs of the intervening ground, creep unnoticed within a few paces of the weary men, thrown out in advance to protect "the opening" of the trenches, the situation is serious. The assailants, making a sudden rush, hurl the "covering parties" slap bang upon the diggers, drive the entire crew harum-scarum before them, and then, proceed to tear up the gabions, and, time permitting, to fill in a portion of the ditch. This sort of thing being effected with more or less success, the sortie, almost untouched, falls back on the town, just as the investor, having rallied the fugitives, (not an easy task in a fierce night storm) and obtained reinforcements, reappears on the stage: to find only bleeding mess-mates, broken gabions, and half-demolished parapets.

It was fortunate that at this stage of operations the enemy did not frequently resort to such attacks, for the purpose of impeding the progress of our works and annoying the working parties; had he done so, boldly and expertly, there can be little doubt but that considerable injury must have been inflicted on us, for, at first, disorder rioted in our two "attacks." Officers and men, alike new to the duty required of them, were alto-



gether abroad on Frenchman's-hill and on Green-hill. Of the plan of the batteries, of the topography of the circum-jacent ground, colonel and corporal were equally in the dark, subaltern and sergeant, at their wit's end, groped in the same miry, uninvestigated maze. What was the consequence? Why, the soldiers, finding themselves stumbling about, as if blindfolded, and observing that their superiors were not a jot more enlightened than themselves, dreaded a night attack more than anything. I have often heard veterans declare "they would rather face 1,000 Roosians in the daytime than 100 at night, in the b—— ditches, where none on us—officers or soldiers—knows whether he stands on his head or his heels."

But might not the confusion, rampant in the trenches at the commencement of the siege, have been prevented, or, at least, abated by judicious arrangement, by method, by supervision? Unquestionably! Had an intelligent officer been appointed superintendent of the trenches, what the French call *Major de tranchée*; had the Brigadiers been required to take command, by turns, of the troops employed in and about the batteries; had the commanding and field-officers been requested to make themselves acquainted with the works and the character of the neighbouring ground, by means of plans, much of the uproar and perturbation which, in October and November, '54, always arose on the relief of covering and digging parties, would not have occurred, many egregious and dangerous blunders in the posting of sentries and outlying detachments, could hardly have been fallen into.

The "go-and-do-it" principle, the abandonment of a senior officer for the time being, whether he be shrewd or silly, experienced or inexperienced, educated or uneducated, to his unaided devices amid a labyrinth of ditches, in a squally night, is, at best, an unsound principle. In the following reply of an influential official to a dis-

tinguished officer (who complained of the irregularities and misapprehensions ever recurring in the trenches, of the total want of system there, of the absence of general instructions), "Oh, those are matters of detail, which you must settle among yourselves," peeps out loose and perilous professional doctrine. Is not everybody's business nobody's business ?

A few practical lessons in war suffice to teach, how in *in re militari* no iota may be left to chance with impunity ; how certain guiding rules must be kept constantly in view, and unswervingly acted upon ! how soldiers—often very acute reasoners—must be led to feel confident that all things are in gear, in hand, that foresight has scanned the situation in which they chance to be placed, that skill and knowledge have provided against the contingencies anticipated by foresight.

OCT. 13.—At 3 a.m. a covering party, consisting of four companies of Guards, and three companies of the 79th Highlanders, marched for Frenchman's-hill (Gordon's battery). As it was the most sheltered *route*, we took the Woronzow road, through the "Valley of the Shadow of Death" (as the gorge was afterwards called.) We had a roughish walk of it. Owing to Stygian darkness, there was no possibility of picking our way amongst the big stones and cannon balls that, even at this early period of business, were thickly strewn about the bottom of the ghastly glen. Hence, our slow and floundering progress was broken with many wholesale tumbles, and was all along vocal with "oh's, ah's," involuntary imprecations, and gnashing of teeth, as feet cropped with corns, and other sensitive callosities, came into collision with knife-like flints, or with the edged corners of shell-splinters.

The Russian batteries slept, and there was perfect stillness in the air ; not a sound to be heard beyond the tramp of heavy boots and the clatter of an occasional capsized. We had passed several picquet sentries, but still

no sign of turning into the path, which, twisting up the precipitous crags, led to Gordon's works. And now whispers began to float about, "We must be going too far, surely;" at length a dead stop, "Holloa, what's the matter?" An undertoned command, "Right about, turn," ran down to the rear companies, and immediately we were hurriedly retracing our steps. The whisperers were correct; we had, indeed, gone too far. The person who had professed to guide the detachment to its destination knew nothing, or next to nothing, about the localities; therefore were we within an ace of quietly walking into the lion's mouth, into Sevastopol, verily. We may thank our stars that, on this occasion, the enemy was not astir, and that our commanding officer, Colonel Upton, was a cool veteran, who had learnt his trade on Indian service; in a juncture requiring both judgment and promptitude, this good soldier showed himself deficient in neither qualification; he it was that discovered the aberration of the pilot, and consequently saved a good ship from running ashore.

On reaching the battery a sort of blind man's buff commenced. The new coverers had to be stowed in positions; the old coverers had to be got out of positions. Imagine the scene, intense darkness, and a bleak hill side cut up with ditches. Consider the actors. A couple of thousand men as completely out of their element on this trap-full stage as if they had suddenly dropped from the flying island of Laputa. Recollect, that noise is often the cloak of ignorance; that in the army, officers and sergeants bawl the louder, the more bewildered they get, and in the clamorous hubbub fermenting in your mind's eye, you may conceive a notion of the serio-comic drama, entitled "Relief in the Trenches," enacted before daylight every morning on Frenchman's hill and on Green hill. At length, the first and worst act of toil and trouble closed,

the former garrison had marched off; our fellows, after great ado, were stationed, as nearly as we can make out, in the right places. Now dawned day; thereon the Russian artillery (which had been conveniently silent hitherto) began to crow.

A sufficient number of yards of trench having been dug by this time, the working parties were at present engaged in elaborating these simple ditches into the perfect battery, a comparatively safe job, for every soldier "navvy" shovelled away under good cover; with the armed, or covering party, (*i.e.* the detachment that has to protect the works and workmen from a rush of the enemy) it was different. Only a small portion of these troops could find room within the unfinished redoubt; hence, the majority had to be content with such natural shelter from fire as the undulations of the adjacent ground afforded. The formation of the earth being propitious in this case, a considerable body of men could with ease be pretty securely disposed immediately in rear of the actual works.

This, then, was the posture of matters. Within the mud parapets five or six hundred men drudged at building traverses, and laying gun platforms, while, outside (rear-wards) as close as possible under the crest of the hill, crouched the "coverers;" below these, the arms were piled. Now, the result of the soldiers' sticking at full length to the posterior slopes, was, that the enemy's round shot, skimming the top of the parapet, flew a few feet above their heads, and, after striking the earth fifty or sixty paces further on, rolled harmless into the Woronzow ravine. It is obvious, therefore, that horizontal fire is comparatively of little moment in such a predicament—that men may generally "dodge" it. Not so, however, with the vertical, or shell practice; for, provided the fuse be correctly cut, and the mortar skilfully pointed, there is a probability of that murderous missile pitching plump into



the midst of the recumbent, or sitting, soldiery, and, on the instant, flinging around death, or mangling worse than death. Although, on this occasion, an incessant storm of solid shot poured, from dawn till noon, upon both Gordon's and Chapman's batteries, we were favoured with comparatively few shells, and those few, by a miraculous dispensation, mostly exploded in vain. It is marvellous how closely the iron fiends will shave without drawing blood; here, we had triangular splinters, of 13-inch bombs, humming playfully about our ears, and whirling into the midst of the stacked muskets, without overturning a single pile. Nor were narrow escapes from roundshot infrequent; ever and anon, a mighty pounder would travel so near a forage-cap, that, for a second or two, we thought it all up with the wearer. A remarkable miss of this kind of demolition had Major Taylor of the 79th. That officer was lying flat on the slope talking to a number of similarly-settled comrades, when on a sudden a heavy "phud" was heard, and a large shot had actually buried itself in the ground, which happily was soft thereabout, within a foot of the worthy Highlander's jolly face. Many saw the ball strike, and cried out, "It's all up with poor Taylor;" when we beheld him arise, bemired with mould (a good barrowful had been pitched over his head and shoulders by the concussion) but unhurt and smiling, we could scarcely believe our senses.

Noon being his dinner-hour, the Russian slackened fire, contenting himself with a solitary bang at rare intervals; thus, for nearly two hours, did we enjoy a cessation of his ponderous play. This interval of peace was exceedingly agreeable, seeing that it enabled the men to discuss their "grub" in comfort, and, that indispensable duty over, to stretch their legs, and look about them a little. As I was taking a view at the opposite Green-hill, through a good

reconnoitring glass, I observed two riflemen come out of the battery there, and seating themselves on the sunny bank, behind the work, "pipe" to pork and biscuits. Heavens ! in the twinkling of an eye, one of the "diners out" falls forward on the ground, his head struck off by a round shot ! The horrified messmate springs up, and, casting away his food, tears back again, like mad, into the trench ; presently, a file of men issue therefrom, and, throwing a cloak over the trunk, bear off a lump of clay, that, only a few minutes before, was a breathing creature,—a brave, hawk-eyed marksman, I'll be sworn.

About 2 p.m., the refreshed foe re-opened upon us, and continued to fire briskly till sunset ; the booming of cannon then died gradually away, so that when the hour arrived for relieving the weary troops, that tiresome process was got through without any disturbance from shot or shell. Notwithstanding the heavy fire which Frenchman's Hill had at times to breast to-day, our casualties were very trifling—deaths, there being none—for which happy consummation of twenty-four hours' duty, we are in no slight degree indebted to the "Ruski," who, inadvertently, selected for the emptying of his wrathful vials, the very seasons our poor persons happened to be best prepared to withstand the dread outpouring. Words cannot express the joy with which we found ourselves again in camp, for foul and comfortless as the tents be, they are our homes ; they imply, at any rate, rest and shelter.

OCT. 14.—The duties grow very hard. For myself, I have been at work four nights out of five and so have many others ; consequently, we are somewhat "limp and washed-out." But in this respect, of course, the rank and file are the principal sufferers. To what insignificance do our hardships sink when compared with theirs ! In the case of the private, downright

manual labour—picking, shoveling, dragging, lifting—is superadded to watching. In his instance, no little dainties purchased on board the transports—no tea, marmalade, port-wine, preserved collops—vary the nauseous monotony of salt junk, and the wish-wash of “green coffee.” In his instance, the tatters—which were an uniform once—only cover the wearer’s nakedness imperfectly: that ragged patchwork has long ceased to combat with the wind and rain. For all practical purposes, it is “used up.” Oh! what painful illustrations of the cheap and nasty principle, are those filthy dangling shreds and bursted seams! How one’s heart yearns toward the unflinching British “common soldier,” so sternly superior to privation, so proudly reckless of his life. Brave heart! unconquerable soul; “Crimean hero,” whom we cannot glorify over much!

OCT. 15.—They talk of our opening fire on Tuesday, and great effects are anticipated from the tornado of projectiles which the Allies are preparing to hurl upon Sevastopol. About 2000 sailors under the command of Captain Lushington, R.N., with Captains Peel and Randolph, for lieutenants, have pitched their tents (!) under the lee of the Third Division. The “blue jackets” are all excellent gunners, and will doubtless play a rough game with their ship-guns and mortars. A battalion of marines (formed out of contingents furnished by various ships) is doing duty on the Balaclava heights—a superb *corps*—all the men being broad-shouldered, straight-limbed, and above the average height of our infantry.

I have just heard, from good authority, that the supply of medicine in the Balaclava hospital-store, is at an exceedingly low ebb; this is bad news, as diarrhœa increases in the ratio of the soldiers’ fatigue; at this moment, I hardly know a regimental-officer, or private, free from the enfeebling drain.

OCT. 16.—A sapper officer tells me that some original plans of Sevastopol have been discovered in a country house belonging to the Mr. Upton, who fell into our hands the day we reached Balaclava. This Russian *employé* is son of that Colonel Upton who, renouncing England and the English, passed into the Czar's service, and was entrusted with the designing and execution of the prodigious public works, for which Sevastopol is famous; whether these said plans can be turned by us to any practical use is perhaps doubtful; at all events, they should be preserved as curiosities.

The report that our bombardment is to shake earth and firmament to-morrow gains in credibleness. This morning the enemy fired sharply for a while upon our batteries, and effected more damage than usual, several gabions having been displaced, five men badly hurt, and Captain Rowley, Grenadier Guards, a young soldier, whom to know was to love, killed.



## CHAPTER XV.

## THE FIRST BOMBARDMENT.

The Allied batteries : their armament and commanders—Progress of the bombardment—Enter the fleets—Agamemnon stands in to win—Evening ends the fight—English loss—Courage of the seamen—French and Russian losses—Next morning—Russian Reconnaissance—Vastness of Russian resources—Death of Colonel Hood—Lancaster guns—"Twelve Apostles"—At it again—Attempt at a blaze—Sharpshooting—A word on Light Infantry—"On picquet"—What the press did for us—Construction of the sand-bag battery—Marmont and Napier on a General-in-Chief—Serenading—Liprandi in our rear—Effect of music on soldiers—Deserters' tales—Lord Dunkellin's captivity—State of duty-men—A new parallel—The town afire!—An eye upon us—Weary workmen—Stand still—General Todleben—Badness of our shells—The Russian officer—Sir Colin Campbell at Balaclava.

OCT. 17.—*Dies iræ, dies illa*, so eagerly looked for has come ; once more we are offensive. About six a.m. the signal agreed on by the Generals-in-Chief was given, and, the Anglo-French thunder burst forth. The Russians, who, some twenty minutes previously, had begun to fire furiously upon our works, appeared amazed at the first hearty response from the virgin batteries. Their fire faltered ; in a few minutes, however, they were themselves again, and a Titan fight commenced

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With feats of arms,  
From either end of Heaven the welkin burns.



The British "Right Attack," consisted of a 21-gun (Gordon's) battery; a 4-gun battery, armed with 68-pounders, and two smaller works, mounting a Lancaster or two, and 10-inch mortars. The "left attack" was an aggregate of five batteries, mounting thirty-six pieces of artillery, made up of the regular siege train, ship guns, mortars, and Lancasters. Thus, the English had in all seventy-two pieces of various calibre; the French had about sixty cannon. Hence, the Allies worked with some 133 guns and mortars.\*

The "right attack," under the orders of the brave Colonel Dickson, R.A., had to deal with the Malakhoff tower, and the left face or flank of a formidable work, since celebrated under the name of the Redan, at a distance of from 1,200 to 1,400 yards. The "left attack," directed by Majors Irvine and Freese, R.A., strove against the right face of the Redan and the barrack batteries, the distance here being from 1,500 to 1,700 yards. Colonel

\* Number of pieces of ordnance manned by Royal Artillery and Royal Navy on the 17th of October, 1854.

## MORTARS.

13-inch	10-inch	8-inch	5½-inch
"	10	"	"

## GUNS.

Lancaster	24-pounder	32-pr.	8-inch	10-inch	68-pr.	9-pr.
4	30	7	16	"	5	"

Total—72 pieces.

It was eventually discovered to be necessary to augment our siege artillery three-fold in number of guns—207 guns having been in battery September 8th, 1855.

It was found necessary to augment the calibre of our guns in a still greater proportion.

The French in October, November, 1854, had, as has been stated above, about sixty guns. They increased their artillery no less than tenfold, having had 600 pieces in battery September 8th, 1855!

Gambier, R. A., had charge of both British "attacks." The French had five batteries, and one small mortar battery, commanded by Generals Thiry and Bizot, with Colonels Lebœuf, of the artillery, and Tripier, of the engineers, for lieutenants, wherewith to oppose the Flag-staff bastion, the central bastion, and other batteries defending the south-west portion of Sevastopol. In this case, the distance averaged something under 1,000 yards.

Eight o'clock, and the fight rages. "Noises loud and ruinous," jar the frame of heaven; the air is alive with the boom, the hiss, the whiz of projectiles. A little beyond, or, a little short of our works, the earth is ploughed with bounding shot, or indented with deep holes, dug by the bursting of shells. Dense clouds of smoke hang about the town, and so fill the batteries that the artillery-men work in the dark, almost pointing their pieces by guess. Ever and anon, a round shot, striking the angle of an embrasure, rips out gabions, kills a gunner or two, perhaps dismounts a gun. Tumult and confusion all embroiled, shouting, and blood, groans, and death.

By 9 A.M. the cannonade was at its height; the Malakhoff tower showed signs of punishment—the guns on its top had ceased their roar—the Flag-staff battery, too (opposed to the French), had been a good deal knocked about. On a sudden, the Russian fire abated, and the allies, imagining themselves to have the preponderance, redoubled their efforts; indeed the moment for an assault was thought by many to be at hand. Wait a bit! In a little while, the enemy re-opened the ball with increased bitterness. Again the battle stormed; at this time, a shell burst on the powder magazine of No. 4. French battery; the magazine blew up, and nearly fifty corpses, headless, legless, blackened, burnt, mangled, littered the ground, intermingled with fainting wounded, broken gabions, trenching tools, ammunition boxes, spare guns, accoutrements and arms.

And now, Fortune turned her false face from us; French battery, No. 5, being regularly enfiladed, was forced to slacken fire; and in a little while, our allies could only contrive to return an occasional shot here and there. How was it the French batteries suffered so much more than did the English batteries? General Thiry having opened ground closer to the Russian forts than Sir John Burgoyne had done, it follows that the French earth-works were exposed to greater peril than our earth-works: the effects of shot being, of course, destructive, or insignificant, in proportion as the distance traversed by the ball, be short or long. It is but fair to the French that we forget not this fact.

The British thunder rolls on—the Malakoff tower is now little better than a ruin (only yesterday a military band was playing merrily on the roof), but the mud-works girding the base, still spout flame and iron. Our losses continue to be small.

It is half-past twelve o'clock, and the French fleet (hitherto delayed by contrary winds) has taken up its position against Fort Alexander and the Quarantine. One o'clock, and the English fleet bears up against the more northern forts of Constantine and Nicholas. The noise of the cannonade, deafening before, is absolutely stunning, now that the ships' broadsides are pelting away at the granite. So dense is the smoke, that we can make nothing of the naval tactics; but the bare fact of the "blue jackets" being at work, raises expectation of smash, downfall, triumph.

The *Muscov* never flinches; he stands like a man to his guns, both landward and seaward. He must be liberally supplied with cannon, for if we dismount one of his pieces, its embrasure is silent only for a few minutes, and then blazes away hotly as ever—a fresh heavy pounder at work. The enemy, it afterwards transpired, had a

spare piece buried near every fighting gun; in the event of accident, therefore, befalling the latter, its place could be supplied at very short notice.

About two o'clock, a fearful explosion took place in the core of the Russian works. It was distinctly audible above the din of the conflict—it was visible also—a prodigious black pillar shooting up through the smoke that shrouded town, batteries, ships, sea, everything. It was a sublime moment! The allies shouted with one accord, and some men screamed, "The day's ours! the city's in ruins!" Not so. Those Russians must be chained to their cannon, for with them there is no relenting. The Redan spits furiously as before; nor is the heavy metal, about the basement of that dilapidated white tower, one jot less troublesome.

Four o'clock; broadside upon broadside from our ships, but the space intervening between the heart of oak and the stone tells against us; terrific volleys shake, indeed, the opposite walls, but cannot pound them into the prognosticated dust. Admiral Lyons (second in command of the British fleet) does his best, at all events. Having the old-fashioned sailor's prejudice in favour of close quarters—yard-arm to yard-arm, muzzle to muzzle, and such Nelsonian evolutions, he drives the good ship *Agamemnon* right at the forts, till there remains only four feet of water under her keel; two or three more liners follow the hardy example, and receive many honourable bruises; but the bulk of the squadron stands further out: consequently, wielding the hammer less effectually, but, at the same time, getting less heavily hammered.

At last the fight waned; darkness stepped in, and smote down the rapiers of the combatants. Toward six p.m. the fleets drew off to their respective anchorages. By slow degrees the uproar died out, and we were forced, very unwillingly, to confess to one another, that the bombard-



ment had not answered expectation. A cannonade of twelve mortal hours had shown the number, calibre, and working of the enemy's artillery to be far superior to anything we had anticipated. It was evident too, that the defence was ably conducted, and that the mere gunners were (what had been denied hitherto) skilful as well as stubborn. In fact, there was an entrenched army in front, worthy the drive of French and English steel.

Owing to the distance from the town at which our works had been thrown up, and the substantial manner in which Captains Gordon and Chapman, R.E., had built the traverses, parapets, &c., the British loss was trifling; about 153 killed and wounded, since we broke ground.

On this occasion, our fleet lost 44 men killed, and 266 wounded, the *Agamemnon*, *Sanspareil*, and *London*, being considerably damaged in hull, masts, and yards, with shell and red-hot shot. I must mention the conspicuous fashion in which the sailors, under Captain Lushington, R.N., fought their "shore-going" battery. There is a recklessness *sui generis* about the seaman's courage. For instance, whenever a particularly effective shot issued from one of their embrasures, the tars would leap *en masse* upon the parapet, wave the Union Jack, and cheer like devils. A defiance that had the effect of bringing upon the brave, but thoughtless, fellows, an augmented dose of "No bono" iron.

In consequence of closer neighbourhood to the enemy's redoubts, and of terrible magazine explosions, the French loss was far heavier than our own. Their ships, too, sailed off with deep marks of rough usage. The flagship, *Ville-de-Paris*, being, as was becoming, the most seriously cut, and banged about.

It appears from Prince Menschikoff's despatch, that the Russians had 500 men put *hors de combat* on the 17th, among whom were Admirals Kornileff (killed) and Nachi-



moff, the hero of Sinope (?) (wounded). The same document acknowledges that forts Alexander and Constantine were injured by the fire of the more advanced men-o'-war—Bravo, Agamemnon, and Ville-de-Paris !

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OCT. 13.—At day-break, the cannonade re-commenced, with small chance of success on our side, for the French batteries have been mauled to such an extent, as to require 24 hours, and many hundred hands, to render them serviceable again.

The enemy, it is evident, has, during the night, been mounting new pieces, and putting breakages to rights. Thus, the Russian is as a giant refreshed, while the Allies, hurt in the left arm, have only the right hand, wherewith to fight Briareus.

About 11 a.m., there was an alarm, "Our rear is attacked !" It turned out that a couple of battalions of Russian foot, and a squadron or two of horse, coming from the direction of Chorguna, had attempted to get a view of Balaclava; but the Turks, being on the alert, brought a pair of guns to bear, on which, the reconnoitring corps made off.

As evening wore on, it became manifest that the enemy, as regards quantity of fire, had a decided superiority over the allies ; indeed, towards 4 p.m., he was giving us at least four balls to our two. The Grenadier Guards sustained a blow to-day in the death of their able commanding officer, Colonel Hood, killed by a cannon shot, as he was peeping at the town, over the parapet of Gordon's battery.

As yet, the Lancaster guns have rather disappointed expectation. Their range (over four miles) is prodigious, and the effect produced tremendous, when the rattling elliptical ball tells ; but the gunners declare that, do what they will, they can never rely on the projectile striking the object aimed at, so wayward and uncontrollable is the ponderous flight of this 90 lb. lump of iron.\* Time,

\* Each Lancaster ball cost John Bull 25s.

however, may prove the uncertainty, complained of, to be owing rather to the clumsiness of men, working with a new and unwieldy tool, than to any radical imperfection in the tool itself. The moored Russian ships annoy both our "attacks" with a continuous vertical fire, and so cunningly have these vessels been disposed, that, despite every kind of scheming on the part of the artillerymen, our 68-pounders go on missing their hulls. Our most pertinacious foe in the ship line is the 120-gun, first rate, "Twelve Apostles," anchored broadside on at the head of the Dockyard harbour. Never, in truth, was preaching more practical and moving—I do not say salutary,—than is the preaching of these militant Evangelists. As familiarity breeds disrespect, so have our soldiers come to express themselves rather irreverently about the "Twelve." Thus, an officer told me, this morning, that, meeting a detachment of his regiment marching into camp from the trenches, he asked one of the non-commissioned officers, "how the men had got on during their tour of duty?" "Pretty well, thank ye, Sir," replied the honest sergeant, "we hadn't much to complain of, barring them — 'Twelve Apostles' what kept a worriting on us all day, ay, and night too, be — to them!"

OCT. 19.—During the night (of the 18th) there was a lull—scarcely a gun fired on either side. This intermission was spent by us in repairing damaged embrasures, relaying shaken platforms, and adding new traverses; when day broke, the renovated aspect of the Russian works showed that the enemy had likewise turned their leisure hours to good account.

At half-past six a.m., business recommenced in bitterest earnest; the French (who have had over 5,000 men incessantly at work on their redoubts, since the evening of the 17th) were able to lend a hand with some effect, notwithstanding the speedy snuffing out, by a crushing enfilading fire, of

No. 5 battery—the same which was so nearly razed on the opening day. It is satisfactory to know, that our allies have, at any rate, succeeded in hitting that ugly Flagstaff bastion very hard. Lord Raglan having been prevailed on to sanction an attempt at setting the town on fire, dozens of rockets and carcasses have been hurled into the place. The course of these dreadful emissaries seems to be even more contrarious than that of the Lancaster balls. The bull's eye is, somehow, very seldom hit, and, although a deal of desultory destruction must have resulted from the explosions, our object has not been attained ; occasionally, indeed, a blaze would shoot up for a few minutes (exciting high hopes among the besiegers), and then, suddenly die out : the anti-combustible nature of stone walls, watched, by an army, being overmuch for our incendiary efforts.

For some days past, volunteers from the light companies of various regiments have been engaged either in annoying the enemy's artillerymen, by firing into their embrasures, or in keeping the Russian *tirailleurs*, who were growing intrusive, at a more respectful distance. These duties are performed with ability in proportion to the common-sense and military knowledge pertaining to the officers thus specially employed. Two leaders of the skirmishing parties, Captain (now Major) Goodlake, Coldstream Guards, and a Captain of the 88th (I think) have already shown marked intelligence and wariness in, what to them is, a novel part. This morning, a lot of our sharpshooters got to very close quarters with a rather more numerous body of the enemy's riflemen. An eccentric combat ensued. At first, everything went "according to regulation ;" the muskets cracked sharply on both sides ; but, after a few minutes' "potting," the English, finding their pouches unaccountably empty, began to chuck stones



at the "Rooshians," who, wonderful to tell, slung their carabines, and replied in the same coin ; so there was a stiff bout of stone-balling between the two—a school-boy encounter that soon ended in the *No Bonos* scampering off amid derisive cheers from their opponents.

Talking of sharp-shooters, one cannot help calling to mind that the British infantry is too often imperfectly trained in light-movements. As practised in some regiments, this important branch of tactics is mere barrack-square drill, theatrical parade, indifferently executed. Will you throw a glance at the instruction in skirmishing occasionally imparted to English soldiers? Imagine yourself in a barrack-yard, at the commencement of the restless month preceding a "half-yearly inspection." A corps is drawn up on parade ; it is what is called a "steady" one ; several manœuvres have been gone through with *aplomb* ; the *pons asinorum* of juvenile tacticians—"change of front to the rear, on the centre," has been passed without any glaring "club." Now, for the indispensable "light infantry," which is to delight the District-General. "Line will advance, covered by the grenadiers," bellows the Colonel. Not a move. There's a hitch somewhere. "What's Captain Hulks about?—what are those Grenadiers at?—Will you move, sir?" storms the fuming Commander. Poor Captain Hulks, give him time ; he's thinking how your unwonted order is to be executed. Lo ! the Adjutant gallops at the embarrassed company—the Sergeant-Major races at the tail of his superior's war-horse—a momentary conference between these functionaries, and the flustered Captain, and then, the "crushers" may be seen to extend themselves in front of the regiment, and the voice of the Sergeant-Major is to be heard continually exhorting, "Mind your dressing, men ; dress by the right. Look to the right, that left sub-division."



Mark the stress laid on the alignment, as if that were the alpha and omega of the matter.

Occasionally, you come across troops more deftly handled. Officers are better up in their parts. On the issue of an order, skirmishers, starting forth from the battalion, advance, load, fire, lie down, retire ; in short, play all manner of tricks, with an automatic precision, an undeviating "dressing," amazing to spectators. "This is satisfactory, at all events!" Yes, as far as it goes ; but don't be so sure that the ready gentlemen, whose display has made you to stare and wonder, are, as regards the practical purposes of "light infantry," very much more enlightened than the perplexed Hulks. The former, indeed, may surpass the latter in knowledge of the rind and surface of the thing ; the mechanical part of the system may be familiar to them ; they may be at home in front of most of the "Sir George Tuftos," who review our soldiery ; their working on smooth ground may be a sight worth seeing ; and yet, with all this smartness, our friends may comprehend but little of the rationale, the why and wherefore of drill ; nay, in an emergency, might possibly feel at a loss how to apply means to an end. Why so ? Because, with us, military training is mere varnish, instruction that causes men to walk, but not to think ; a teaching that opens the chest, but cramps the mind. Infinite pains are taken to make the legs and arms of recruits go through certain exercises, but small pains are taken to impress on thoughtless ensigns and privates the aim, the object, the *use* of those exercises. Now, in the case of "light infantry," where so much depends on individual intelligence, routine manœuvring, if crammed into the pupil, unaccompanied with explanatory comment, unelucidated with plain observations on the importance of taking advantage of every irregularity or peculiarity of ground, of

getting under cover wherever a tree, bush, boulder, or hahā present themselves, of looking well to flanks, &c., is not only fruitless, but absolutely dangerous; for this reason, the sharp-witted soldier, seeing the absurdity of Sergeant-Major Dressup's "scrummaging" on a grass-plot, wearied out with incessantly advancing and retiring over the gravel, ends by shaking his mind clear of the tedious subject. "He knows the clock-work of the craft—does the *adjutant* know more? What's the good of this 'ere humbugging drill, unless to please the civilians; he'll not bother hisself any more about it, not he."

I may be told, "our men pick up all these things on service." They do, I admit it, but at what a cost! Education under fire is sadly expensive in blood. Is it not wise to acquire a touch of the "science," before presuming to set-to with one of the "fancy?"

The late excellent inspector-general of infantry did his best to put tactical instruction on a more reasonable footing amongst us; and it is probable that his exertions were, to no small extent, crowned with success. Sir Colin, and Aldershott in combination, have unquestionably effected a good deal of wholesome reform. But neither general nor camp can have power to cure a decayed system. If we would restore the invalid military constitution to health, we must call in surgeons, rather than homœopathic physicians; we must have the patient laid on the operating table; we must apply the knife and cautery, rather than gentle alteratives. Promotion by purchase must be cut away; nepotism—"Dowbism"—must be burnt out; drenching doses of a new medicine—technical and practical education—must be thrown in, before the British army becomes—what it ought to have been long ago—the model army of Europe.

OCT. 20.—On picquet in rear of our position. Along the crest of the heights overhanging the valley of the

the Tchernaiia, stretches a chain of outposts. The French have the watch from near Kadi-koi to the Telegraph ; whereabouts they are joined by the First (British) Division, which mounts guard as far as Inkermann ; at that point, the Second Division (Evans's) takes up the look-out. The duties on picquet being light, compared with duties in the trenches, both officers and soldiers contemplate with pleasure the coming round of their turn of 24 hours' location on the raw hill-side. While day lasts, there is little to be done beyond keeping your eyes open, making yourself "at home," and—whenever the article can be begged, borrowed, or stolen—conning a newspaper. What a debt of gratitude we owe to the press ! It stood the soldiers' friend in the hour of need. It forced the Horse Guards to arm him with a musket, which would not fail a true eye and a steady hand. It told the touching story of the rank and file to the whole world. It aroused popular sympathy in their behalf. It cheered their poor hearts, sinking under the pressure of cold, hunger, and fatigue. It clothed the sick ; it cleansed gangrenous hospitals ; in truth, it stepped in between death and the English army. A ringing cheer, then, for "Our own correspondents !"

The copy of the *Times* which I had secured for picquet-reading, was dated October 3rd, and contained great news—"Sebastopol taken by the Allies"—of course, a flood of blood, mountains of carcasses, tens of thousands of prisoners ! Heigho ! a bitter contrast lies between the real state of things and the baseless jubilation of John Bull—how harshly do his songs of triumph, his obstreperous *tol de roll iolls*, grate upon our ears. How sore will be the mortification at home, when Britons discover that they have been beating the air in vain, that they have been magnificently hoaxed !

Near quid-nuncs asking "Did your soldiers employ their

leisure hours on outpost-duty, in mending coats, trowsers, and boots, which you have described, some pages back, as being in bad condition?" But seldom; not because the troops were lazy, or unable, from sartorial incapacity, to sew on buttons, or put in a patch, but because scarcely any materials for so doing, existed on the heights; many a sensible fellow, indeed, had taken possession of the little "housewives" found on the Russian dead at the Alma, but owing to the ill-advised divorce between the foot-soldier and knapsack, there were no means of securely stowing away these useful acquisitions, *ergo*—they were nearly all lost.

Toward evening we observed an unusual moving to and fro of people, and hauling of heavy things amongst the ruins of Inkermann. Not unnaturally our minds jumped to the conclusion that the enemy were mounting guns, with which to harass the neighbouring camps and pickets. This, too, would seem to have been the view Sir De Lacy Evans took of the affair; for that vigilant soldier persuaded Lord Raglan to give orders for the immediate construction of a sand-bag battery,—to hold two 18-pounders—on the spur of the ridge frowning upon the crumbling castle of Diophantes.

For a while, a good look out was kept by us toward the ruins, but the commotion there having subsided, we were about to consign the matter to the limbo of false alarms, when a sentry sung out—his keen eye had caught sight of a little puff of smoke, the inevitable precursor of a ball,—“I think as how they be a going to fire out yander.” Sure enough; before the sentence had well tumbled from the man’s lips, whiz came a shot; it fell short of our post, however, but must have passed pretty near one of the Second Division’s pickets. Before we had time to focus our glasses for a sight, there was another billet, harmless still, but range improved. After



this, we starvelings on watch were left at peace ; the 24-pounder shots being henceforth devoted to the nobler purpose of stirring up mischief amongst the tents of the Second Division. However, the annoyance lasted not long ; in a day or two the sand-bag work was ready, and General Evans had two 18-pounders bearing on the old donjon keep. With such effect did these excellent guns open fire, that the Russians delayed not to withdraw their couple of 24-pounders altogether from the ruins ; on which, Sir De Lacy had the embrasures of his little battery filled up with deceptive boughs, and removed the two eighteens, for he wisely feared for their safety in so exposed a position.

According to their almost daily habit, Generals Canrobert and Bosquet rode this afternoon along the line of posts,—English as well as French,—which guard the rear and right flank. Indefatigable horsemen those ! ever up and doing,—seeing with their own eyes, hearing with their own ears. One cannot fail to notice the good effect which this out-of-door restlessness has on the French soldiers. It makes them feel that they are uppermost in their Commander's thoughts. This diligent inspection of the Army, and of its position, inspires confidence as well as affection. It convinces—Zouaves have often told me so—those shivering in the trenches, and on night sentry, that the Chief “knows what he's about,”—that he has mastered his subject from evidence collected by himself ; not from information filtered through the distorting medium of underlings. Thus forcibly does Marshal Marmont write on the necessity of unintermitting action on the part of a General-in-Chief. *“Connaissant le prix du temps, seul trésor qui ne peut se suppléer, il (le Général) se dispensera d'écrire, beaucoup lui-même, en laissant ce soin à ceux qui, par devoir, ont la charge de transmettre*

*ses ordres ; il se réservera seulement d'en approuver la rédaction. Jamais un bon général n'a beaucoup écrit dans les mouvements de la guerre. C'est la tête qui doit travailler et non la main ; il emploie son temps plus utilement en donnant ses instructions verbales, en conservant la liberté d'esprit pour juger si l'on a rendu fidèlement ses intentions, et pour méditer des combinaisons nouvelles,—Son activité doit être sans bornes ; sa présence souvent inopinée laissera chacun dans la crainte d'être pris en faute, il soutiendra ainsi le zèle de tous." (L'Esprit des Institutions Militaires.)*

Listen also to Sir Charles Napier on this subject. That General says : "The great art of commanding is, taking a fair share of the work. Men in power can easily avoid this share, and generally do so, and thus spoil the spirit of their troops, who see that fair play does not go on. In the hour of trial, their leader is unknown to them, and hence an old man does not do for war. Muley Bey, and Marshal Saxe won battles from a litter, but solitary examples will not shake a principle. The soldiers must *see their commander*, and that he takes as little rest as they do ; then matters are done with a will—a spirit not easy to stand against." (*Life of Sir Charles J. Napier*, v. 3, p. 347.)

Towards 9 p.m.—the night was bitter cold—we were all huddled round the watch-fires ; some telling tales of Jack's "pluck" or Tom's Christian-like death ; others speculating on "what was going to be done ;" others, again, lamenting over their own seedy suits, and unkempt, filth-encrusted persons, when—hark ! "where can that noise be ? Why, it's music, as I'm alive !" Gradually, the sounds grew more and more distinct, and, in twenty minutes, the valley beneath us re-echoed

"With shrill notes of anger,  
And mortal alarms."

Trumpets brayed, drums rolled, and we had "God preserve the Czar," discoursed by ten fine bands at least. These unexpected serenaders, however, were not allowed to have the concert entirely to themselves. Their defiant notes were well and speedily answered. Posted on the telegraph mound the superb band of the Zouaves thundered out "God save the Queen," and "*Partant pour la Syrie*." It was an animating time; martial melody floated crisp and sharp on the chill air; we could hear, too, the distant rumble of guns, and, occasionally, the clatter of horses' hoofs. By and by, the furthest extremity of the valley began to twinkle with bivouac fires. There was a startling meaning in all this. The untimely clamour heralded the coming of General Liprandi. We had an enemy in our rear.

Did not English bandsmen take their proper place beside the French musicians on this occasion? No; our bands, by this time, were completely disorganized, most of the *cornet-à-pistons*, clarionets, and trombones having been either lost, or thrown away during the march from Old Fort, when their owners were turned into beasts of burden—human ambulances.

Immediately on our arrival upon the heights before Sevastopol, a command was issued that no orderly drum or bugle should sound in the English lines, for fear of informing the enemy as to our whereabouts; accordingly, directions about the assembly of parades, fatigue-parties, &c., had to be given *vivâ voce* by drummers, who ran from tent to tent, screaming "It's time to fall in; fall in the working party." This vocal expedient was at no time resorted to by our allies. The *rappel* and the *générale* beat, as usual, in all their quarters; every Zouave, Chasseur, and Ligne battalion marched *musique en tête*. Having repeatedly heard our soldiers complain that their old familiar "calls" and "taps" were hushed, having remarked the

delight with which, at a later period, our rank and file clustered around the French bands, I feel sure that music exercises a very beneficial influence on the minds of troops in war. It evidently warms and stimulates freezing spirits. It lifts up heavy hearts. Nor is this *petit verre de cognac* effect surprising. Who has not felt the depression which a dreary silence produces? Who knows not that men always march with a sprightlier step, when the drums and fifes strike up "The British Grenadiers." Truly says Samuel Butler—

"'Tis sound of trumpet, beat of drum,  
That makes the warriors' stomach come;  
Whose noise whets valour sharp like beer,  
By thunder, turned to vinegar."

The night passed away without aught more note-worthy than an incessant "pop, pop," kept up by our advanced sentries, who imagined a Cossack in every bush shaken by the wind. This waste of powder and shot had at least one advantage—that of proving to the new comers that we stood well on the alert.

OCT. 21.—Nothing very extraordinary in the front; indeed the fire on both sides has languished somewhat; nevertheless, the Russians are improving in their shell practice; they will shortly have our range to a nicety. The French, who are actively employed in pushing approaches closer upon the town, suffer heavy loss; their advanced working parties being of course shelled without ceasing. I am told, a ship laden with ammunition has just entered Balaclava harbour—most seasonable arrival, for powder and shot were positively running short. A Polish deserter joined head-quarters yesterday; and, if current report is to be believed, told Lord Raglan agreeable tales concerning the domestic economy of Sevastopol. According to our new friend, 3000 Russians have already fallen within the walls of the town, the stench of decaying carcasses is



abominable ; the Polanders are so discontented, that it is necessary to chain the cannoneers of that aggrieved nationality to their guns ; the entire *bourgeoisie* is forced to sweat at the fortifications ; and sleek burghers, not a few, have been shot by Menschikoff, for plying a sulky or indolent mattock ; the women are turned into water-carriers and powder-monkeys ; and when idle, or even dilatory in the performance of their duty, are inexorably knouted. Now this story may be wholly correct, but yet I had rather set it down as possessing but a thin substratum of truth ; are not deserters likely to say whatever may appear suitable to their own interests ? Would they not, in all probability, be more intent on telling pleasant things to their new acquaintances, than squeamish about misrepresenting facts relative to their quondam comrades ?

OCT. 22.—The enemy's attention being chiefly occupied by the forward sapping of our allies—who, in addition to other staggering facers, were last night visited by a sortie, which, slinking into their works under a forged pass-cry of *Ingliz, Ingliz*, contrived to spike a mortar or two, before it could be pushed back—we have been afforded an opportunity of mounting some maiden guns, repairing platforms, and erecting new traverses. Captain Chapman, R.E., has also begun to open trenches in advance of the "left attack," which trenches will soon assume the shape of a battery, whence those satanic ships—"Vladimir," and "Twelve Apostles," &c.—may possibly be reached with red-hot shot.

Lord Dunkellin, of the Coldstream Guards, has fallen into captivity. Last night he went forth in command of a working party, designed for Frenchman's-hill. His detachment passed the almost imperceptible track leading to the battery, and continued its march down the Death Valley, till it came within a few yards of what, in the deceptive darkness, was taken for an English picquet.

Here, Lord Dunkellin advanced alone, for the purpose of inquiring, from his supposed countrymen, the way to Frenchman's-hill. The rest of the story is soon told. The Coldstreamers, hearing "a bit of a scuffle," and finding their captain did not come back, guessed the state of the case, and beat a wise retreat (they were armed only with spades and pickaxes) and under the conduct of a sergeant ultimately found their way to Gordon's battery, where they did their stroke of work, and then, returned home to tell the news of their bereavement. If our fellows had had their Miniés, the upshot of this incident would have been different. Give them something like a fair field—a tussle foot-to-foot, and beard to beard—and Englishmen will seldom be made prisoners of.

OCT. 23.—On a covering-party to the trenches of "right attack." During the day we sojourned in the caves, which either Nature or man has hollowed out of the sides of the crags jutting on the Woronzow ravine: a secure position, a sheltered berth, seeing that all the shot and shell—of which there was no stint—flying high over our protected heads tumbled harmlessly into the road beneath. Diarrhoea being the rule, not the exception, in the up-and-doing portion of the army, several of the soldiers, present on this service, were more fit for the hospital tent, than for duty. In these caverns, where a healthy body of men were supposed to be collected for the protection of the siege-works, you heard groans, and saw wasted wretches lying faint—all but powerless. What could the officers do for the "never-say-die" fellows? Little; the officer being nearly as ill-off as the private. Both wore rotting garments, both ate junk, both shared hardships in a nearly equal degree. But St. James having money at his disposal, could, now and then, buy a little brandy or tea from ship-stewards, in which case, he forgot not St. Giles's wants and privations.

At dusk, the troops were moved out of their cozy nooks, and deposited in the trenches. At 9 p.m., four companies of Guards, and three of Highlanders, advanced about a hundred yards in front of the battery, for the purpose of "covering" the opening-out of a new parallel. It was black night; our embrasures were mute, and, not to be outdone in politeness, the Russian artillery slept too—only, however, as regards the British, for the French were shelled occasionally. The soldiers, composing the detachment, alluded to above, lay stretched, in extended double files, some thirty or forty paces ahead of the sappers' marking-tape. Expecting that the enemy would try to drive in the labourers, as soon as he heard the clatter of picks, we ("coverers") kept a sharp look-out. Every moment we thought to be "at it,"—in the words of Suvaroff—"stabbing, driving, firing, taking prisoners, killing, and being killed." Not a bit of it. Floating on the gentle west wind came voices from Sevastopol. We could hear the rumble of carts, the baying of dogs, and the ding-dong music of church-bells. As we listened to those jangling chimes, thoughts of "Home, sweet home!" welled up in our hearts.

Just as the working-parties were about to throw up the first sods, flames burst forth in the quarter of the town directly opposite to where we lay. The fire grew apace; in half-an-hour the inky firmament was crimson with lurid light, flickering, crackling, swaying backward and forward—now, seeming as though it were dying out—now, flashing upward with redoubled fury. The sight was gratifying, and sublime. The Russian has plenty on his hands; he must quench that fire ere he meddles with our diggings; nevertheless, he was not altogether unmindful of us. No; we were continually reconnoitred; the sound of a horse's hoofs, was often in our front, the glimmer of a "bull's-eye" was, by turns, bent on our right flank, on



the centre, on the far left. The enemy's picquet-fires, also, were so nigh, that, thanks to the conflagration, we made out the long-coated soldiers sitting round them.

I have said that the health of not a few men, belonging to the "covering-party," was bad; I can give no better account of a considerable number of the working-party. It was necessarily the duty of officers and sergeants to take care that their people worked hard; to goad the drowsy (wherever symptoms of slackness showed themselves). A heartrending duty, in this case; most mournful to listen to were the replies of the worn-out "heroes," to the reproach, "Ye are idle! ye are idle!" "Sure, sergeant, I'll do me best, but me heart's broke intirely wid the dis-ase, and nivr a night to meself in the tint, at all, at all."

During the night the French and Russians sleepily interchanged shells; but the British, being throughout unmolested, never fired a shot. The intermission was a reciprocal benefit; it enabled us to do the most dangerous part of trenching in perfect safety; it allowed us to save ammunition (which was very scarce), and it permitted the enemy to employ a number of artillerymen in extinguishing what, otherwise, might have been a disastrous conflagration.

OCT. 24.—The siege—or more properly, the bootless discharge of much cannon at mud banks—rubs on. It is manifest we do not make way—it is manifest that the Russians have more than 200 guns well served, admirably constructed batteries, and probably the ablest engineer in the world, wherewith to defend the arsenal of Southern Muscovy. Wise as a serpent was Menschikoff, when, instead of a "respectable old officer, who had traced a redoubt at Borodino," he selected Captain Todleben, the son of a simple burgher, to be engineer-in-chief. The war has produced no greater man than Todleben. To whom is Russia a heavier debtor? Who has done so



much for military art? Not a scientific officer of the three nations, but looks pale beside that young Captain of Sappers.

We have been grievously disappointed in the matter of the Woolwich shells; instead of being more effective than those of the enemy, the British missiles prove to be far less so. A heavy percentage of these bobadils are downright failures—either bursting in the air, or falling short of the mark. Some ascribe so many flashes in the pan to the mouldy, uncared-for age (about fifty years, I believe) of a large quantity of the newly arrived projectiles; others assert, that the fuses thereof are too short. If John Bull read the story of this war aright, he will be a harder, a less confiding task-master for the future. Of a truth, to many a self-sufficient servant ought he to say, "Give up an account of thy stewardship, that thou mayest be no longer steward."

That the Russian officers are both brave and able, there can be no doubt. A sharpshooting lieutenant told me, that, during a skirmish, which took place the other day between our light-bobs and the enemy's *tirailleurs*, he observed the Muscovite commander most gallantly egging on his followers, (who seemed somewhat bashful), to a closer acquaintance with the Englishmen. Presently, his uplifted arm was shattered by a bullet, and yet the noble fellow abated not his exertions; he still cheered on—he even seized with his left hand a poltroon, who was sneaking away to the rear. This was the last act of the brave captain; for the caitiff soldier, desperate in his terror, dashed the butt of his rifle in his leader's face. And now, the Russians fled like hares; their officer falling into our hands a sorely wounded prisoner: his arm broken by a foeman's Minié, his jaw smashed by a countryman's foul blow.

The corps, or a portion of the corps, which made such

a rumpus in our rear on the night of the 20th, has, on more than one occasion since, been feinting toward Kadi-Koi. In these movements Sir Colin Campbell, who has been appointed Commandant of Balaclava, reads—"Beware"—"Shadows of coming events!" Accordingly, the gallant old chief is ever in the saddle, organizing his little force, instructing his staff, and concerting defensive measures with the Lieutenant-General of Cavalry.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## BALACLAVA.

Cannonade in the Rear — Turkish redoubts—Character of the ground—Proceedings of Liprandi—Probable amount of Russian force—British means of defence—Disposition of English and Turks—Russian onset—Fall of the redoubts—Arrival of Lord Raglan—First and Fourth Divisions on the march—Transports prepared for sea—Advance of Russian Cavalry—Irregulars *versus* Highlandmen—Heavy Dragoon trumpet sounds!—Noble feat of arms—Why was it not followed up?—Progress of the Battle—Lord Raglan's third order—New position taken up by Liprandi—Another order—Captain Nolan—Obey orders!—The Ride into the jaws of Death—Under the horse's hoofs—Melée—Retreat—Shewell's stroke—Aid from the Chasseurs d'Afrique—Losses—Who won?—Reflections—Abuse of the Turks—The Spy's news—Orders, three and four.

OCT. 25.—About six, a.m., just as dawn began to glimmer, the soldiers camped on the heights before Sevastopol, were aroused by the booming of artillery in the rear.

Balaclava was attacked!

A glance at the map will show that the valley of Balaclava is separated from the valley of the Tchernaiia by a chain of little hills, which, commencing with a steep, conical mound, called Canrobert's Hill, near Kamara on the south-east, runs in a curved line, till it joins the

heights before Sevastopol on the west. Upon the summits of the mounds forming this range, the Turks, under the directions of an English engineer, had thrown up six ill-designed earthen redoubts, but four of which—those nearest to Kamara—had as yet been armed. In redoubt No 1 (topping Canrobert's Hill) were three 12-pounder guns, borrowed from the fleet, and a garrison of nearly 300 Turks—for the most part, raw, but fine-looking troops; while, in Nos. 2, 3, and 4 redoubts, respectively, were two 12-pounder ship guns, and about 250 Ottomans.

Hence, the land defences of Balaclava consisted of four earth-forts, insufficiently armed, insufficiently garrisoned, imperfectly constructed, altogether without support, and distant from the place they were supposed to protect nearly two miles and a quarter.

No sooner had General Liprandi satisfied himself, by repeated reconnaissances, of the feebleness of these poverty-stricken muniments, than he resolved to attack the base of the British operations.

The configuration of the valley of the Tchernaiia is singularly favourable to a force acting on the offensive. The ground is broken, wavy, and, here and there, studded with clusters of hills. The mountainous ridges to the eastward are cut with ravines, and intersected with roads, leading to Batchi-serai, Simpheropol, Baidar, and so forth. It is obvious, therefore, that a general acquainted with the topography of the valley, and having possession of the ridges overhanging the river on the east, could, by taking advantage of undulations and defiles, not only mask the concentration of his troops, within a convenient distance of the point to be assailed, but keep them concealed till the moment for action came. This Liprandi did. During the night of the 24th, and the early morning of the 25th, a Russian army-corps, consisting of about 20,000 infantry,



5,000 cavalry, and 40 guns, was massed near the village of Chorguna.

The troops at Balaclava were under the joint command of the Earl of Lucan and Sir Colin Campbell. Under the special orders of the former was a small division of cavalry drawing about 1,500 sabres. Under the direct superintendence of the latter were the 93rd Highlanders, a few companies of Marines, a scratch-pack of two or three hundred invalids, three battalions of Turkish militia, and a like number of Tunisian regulars. Such was the heterogeneous force—amounting at most to 5,500 men—with which the brave old Scotchman was expected to make sure of the harbour, to cover Kadi-koi, and to support the line of redoubts, of which, as we have seen, the Turks had very unenviable charge.

With the earliest light, Liprandi debouched with his whole strength from out the two defiles of Chorguna, upon the Woronzow road, and, having arrived within sight of the Turkish works, immediately pushed heavy columns of foot, covered by guns, in position, right at No. 1 redoubt, which, being nearest of the series to Kamara, and crowning Canrobert's hill, was, in fact, the key of the rest of the works.

It is the wholesome rule for troops in camp to be under arms at least one hour before sunrise ; therefore, the British horse, foot, and field batteries were now prepared for any eventuality.

Immediately on receiving intelligence of the Russian advance, Lord Lucan sent an A.D.C. with the news, to Lord Raglan. The cavalry were drawn up *en masse* ; the Light Brigade, consisting of the 4th Light Dragoons, the 8th and 11th Hussars, 13th Light Dragoons, and 17th Lancers, under the command of the Earl of Cardigan ; the Heavy Brigade, comprising the 4th, 5th Dragoon Guards, 1st, 2nd (Scots Greys), and 6th (Inniskilling)

Dragoons, under Major-General Scarlett. The 93rd Highlanders, with a few hundred Turks and Tunisians, took post at the foot of some rising ground, so as to cover Kadi-koi ; and a troop of Horse Artillery (Maude's) was despatched to the right of No. 3 redoubt.

Meanwhile, the enemy continued to advance in dense columns, under cover of guns, upon redoubt No. 1. In vain the devoted Osmanli plied those dark masses with shot from their ship guns. In vain did Maude's six-pounders attempt to gall their flanks. Slowly and steadily the Russians pressed forward, replying to Turks, and to British R. H. A. with a rapid and effective fire from their heavy field-pieces and howitzers. Presently, a weighty column, separating from the main body, marched to the assault, headed by a cloud of skirmishers. The issue could not be dubious. A multitude swarmed into the crazy work. For two or three minutes, a desperate hand to hand, steel to steel, conflict ; and then, the fort was Russian. The greater number of the Osmanli lay dead, or dying ; the lesser number, scrambling over the low mud parapet, made for No. 2 redoubt, or fled towards the town. The Russian Infantry occupied No. 1 in force, and at once turned its guns on No. 2 ; after blazing into which for a little while, they directed their fire on the point where stood the Highlanders and Tunisian *Redif*. Sir Colin Campbell, therefore, caused these troops to retire behind a hillock, which screened them from the enemy's view. The British light battery which had heartily, though vainly, essayed to check the Russian head-way, now fell back, their Captain badly hurt.

To return to the redoubts. By this time No. 2 has been stormed ; its defenders, after no mean resistance, have either been beaten down or are flying in the direction of Balaclava ; its guns have been pointed on No. 3, which, over force, falls too. In short, the enemy has gotten hold

of the chain of miserable forts, together with the cannon mounted therein ; and the Cossacks are spearing, sabreing, pistoling, amid a mob of fugitives rushing to the rear. A few of the Turks, indeed, retire in something like order, and therefore resist their assailants with tolerable success ; but the mass, being in utter confusion, can do nought but strike bludgeon-wise with their muskets at the horsemen : a murderous and unequal sort of fight, peculiarly adapted to the tastes and genius of the Don. Those of the Moslem that escaped slaughter were eventually rallied on the right of the 93rd.

About half-past eight a.m., just as redoubt No. 3 was evacuated by its garrison, Lord Raglan approached the field of battle. He took up his station on a knoll bulging from the foot of the height, on which the telegraph is perched. Orders had lately been forwarded to the Duke of Cambridge and Sir George Cathcart, to march with their Divisions (First and Fourth) towards Balaclava ; the aid of General Canrobert had likewise been requested.

The aspect of affairs was, at this time, so fraught with peril, that Lord Raglan, fearful for the safety of the harbour, sent directions to Captain Tatham, R.N., to prepare the transports for sea ; nor was his Lordship's alarm unfounded, for had Liprandi promptly followed up his success, and pushed, in full force, boldly on, nothing short of a miracle could have saved Balaclava, its stores and shipping ; but the Russian General faltered—perhaps he took the poor parapets, he had so easily trampled down, for blinds to lure him into an ambush ; perhaps he dreaded being smitten in rear by Bosquet's battalions pouring from the western heights, whenever he was inextricably engaged in the little valley of Balaclava.

As soon as the forts had been captured, Lord Lucan changed the front of his division ; he wheeled back the army into position facing the east. The object of this

manœuvre was twofold—1. To enable him (Lucan) to act on Liprandi's flank, in the event of that General continuing to advance. 2. To allow Sir Colin Campbell's Balaklava batteries a clear sweep at the redoubts, from which the Russians were now firing.

Hardly had Lord Lucan completed the new formation, before he received from Lord Raglan the following order, (No. 1):—"Cavalry to take ground to left of second line of redoubts occupied by Turks." In compliance with this direction, the Lieutenant-General again changed front; this time drawing up his horse *en masse*, fronting the north, *i. e.* looking into Inkermann valley. Shortly afterwards another order (No. 2) reached this officer. It was to the effect, that eight squadrons of heavy cavalry should be detached towards Balaklava, for the purpose of supporting the Turks, supposed to be wavering. We will leave the British cavalry, marching and counter-marching after this fashion, and revert to the enemy.

Meanwhile, Liprandi had placed a force of horse, composed of two strong regiments of Hussars, a regiment of regular Cossacks, and about 600 Cossacks of the Don, between his lately acquired redoubts, (Nos. 1, 2, and 3.) These troops had for supports strong columns of infantry, which were kept, partially out of sight, under the northern slopes of the ridge. On a sudden, the Russian cavalry descended into the southern valley. At first, they came on in one dense column, but, after proceeding a couple of hundred yards, the mass split into two parts: the smaller part, the Don Cossack irregulars, trotted leisurely towards the hillock on which the Highlanders and Tunisians were drawn up in line; the greater portion, consisting of Hussars and Cossack regulars, menaced the British heavy dragoons.

Let us now watch the proceedings of the first-named cavaliers (the Don Cossacks). These advanced very cautiously, till they came within 700 yards of the mound held



by the 93rd and Tunisian battalions. At this juncture, the eager Gael fired a volley; but the bullety shower (which will surprise no one who considers the distance) had apparently small effect; but few, if any, saddles were emptied. However, the song of the Minié balls conveyed so unmistakeable a hint of the imprudence of a nearer approach to the bold Scots, that the Calmucks, after a glance at the right flank of the 93rd (the grenadiers of which had been wheeled back, so as to show a front on that side) turned tail, and cantered away for Canrobert's Hill, pursued by a second volley.

All that has been said about a charge of Russian Cavalry on the Highland battalion, of the bloody rebuff with which the charge was beaten back, of Sir Colin Campbell's determination to stem the onslaught with "a thin red line," is, I believe, a mistake. No Cossack that ever was born—it matters not how much *quass* the black-guard might have swilled—would ever dream of riding at British bayonets; nor would an officer of Sir Colin's large experience think, for an instant, of resisting a rush of horse, with a line of foot. The probability is that, in this case, the shaggy marauders were simply reconnoitering—business perfectly agreeable to their discreet dispositions—and that General Campbell had no other concern in the matter than the desire of luring them *quietly* within deadly range of the 93rd muskets.

Now, for the column of Russian Hussars and Dragoons, which we left threatening our Heavy Cavalry. It will be recollected, that Lord Lucan had received instructions from the Commander-in-Chief to support the Sutherland men and Tunisians with eight squadrons of horse. This order was now in course of execution. The Light Brigade, and some guns, under the Earl of Cardigan, remained in their old position, between the orchard and the western heights, while the Heavies, commanded by

General Scarlett, moved toward the left flank of the Highland line. Just as these troopers were rounding the southern corner of the orchard, Lord Lucan (who, from his post near the Light Brigade, had caught sight of the approaching Russians), galloped up ; himself wheeled the leading squadrons into line, and thundered at Scarlett the most laconic, but expressive, of commands—"CHARGE." There was, indeed, not a moment to spare : on came the grey-coated Muscovite dragoons in one thick mass, with long protective wings, spreading out from both flanks—

—— "A horrid front  
Of dreadful length, and dazzling arms."

Hark, the British trumpet ! Lo, the Greys and Inniskilliners trot forth ! An awful stillness. The spectators on the heights scarce breathe ; their anxiety almost passes endurance. The Russian cavalry, confident as well it might be, spurs forward : the foemen near one another ; the pace quickens ; now, it is hard galloping ; the earth shakes under the hoof of the war horse. A crash ! a splintering shock ! the two grapple ; and all is dusty, bloody, mortal hurly-burly ; no trust but in Providence and the broad-sword—hack and slash, stab and drive. See ! the four scarlet squadrons have cut their way through the first Russian line ; they press upon the second line ; at this moment, those outspreading wings wheel inward, and thus the English are imbedded in an overwhelming crowd. Thousands of lookers-on give up their countrymen as lost. Not so ; Lucan hath the 4th and 5th Dragoon Guards in hand ; he springs the leash ; and the Royal Irish tear madly on the left flank of the Muscovite men-at-arms, while the old "Green Horse" go hurling on the rear. Seldom has a manœuvre been more smartly planned ; never has a manœuvre been more manfully carried out. Cut to the heart, pummeled on the flank

battered on the rear, that stately column reels ! loosens ! breaks up ! and a mixed, scattered throng of horsemen rides wildly for the redoubts : Russians, crouching upon their horses' necks, with the notched and dripping blades of the strong armed English playing about their skulls and backs ; many " a fierce dead-doing man " cleft to the chine, rolls from the saddle. Presently the flying enemy nears the cover of his batteries. It is time for our troopers to rein in, lest fire open upon them. The Dragoon Guards desist, therefore, from further pursuit, and the foiled Liprandi reforms his broken ranks on the Tchernaiia side of the ridge, and evacuates Nos. 4 and 5 of the captured redoubts. In this glorious combat, 700 British Dragoons, with trifling loss, discomfited almost 2,500 Russian cavalry, and slew, wounded, or made prisoners, 500 men. Here, at any rate, was a feat of arms, in which every soul concerned—Lord Lucan who so skilfully timed and directed it, Scarlett who so boldly led it, the men of might that with unflinching hearts so fiercely rode it,—deserved well of England. But while we applaud the consummate valour with which the Heavies fought and conquered, it is impossible to avoid inquiring why disordered retreat was not converted into downright rout ? The Light Brigade were so disposed, that the fugitive enemy well nigh passed their front. Why, then, did not the " Lights " lay on ? How was it such an opportunity of cutting up the beaten Russians was allowed to slip by ? But, it may be urged, Lord Lucan was the general in command of the cavalry ; consequently, it was for him to have explicitly informed his lieutenant how and when to act. Now, it must not be forgotten, that Lucan was engaged at the time in superintending the operations of Scarlett's dragoons, at a distance of nearly a mile from where the light horse was drawn up. It was, therefore, obviously impossible for him to instruct Lord Cardigan specifically on the subject. This,

then, is the question,—ought a Brigadier, in the absence of his superior, to take advantage of any opening, which may present itself, for damaging the enemy? ought a Major-General to wait for orders when the enemy scamper like sheep across his line of battle? Doubtless, most soldiers would answer, “an officer, occasion offering, ought to take on himself the responsibility of action.”\* It is of course, quite possible, that the Earl of Cardigan did right in this instance, that he had good military reasons for holding back at so apparently tempting a moment. If so, the Major-General should, in justice to himself, explain the circumstances which restrained his squadrons from giving the last finish to the splendid success achieved by the Dragoon Guards.

The Russian General now threw strong garrisons into redoubts 1, 2, and 3, and then, retired with the bulk of the army into the plain near the river Tchernaiia, contenting himself with cannonading our front, and menacing our right from the direction of Kamara; but on this side, his operations were disconcerted by the exceedingly effective fire of a field-battery posted near the Highlanders. It is said, that whilst this battery was doing such essential service, the Quartermaster-General attempted to withdraw it to the left, but that Sir Colin Campbell, impressed with the imminent danger to which the right flank was exposed, ventured to veto the order. Assuming the correctness of this statement, we may congratulate ourselves that the right man was in the right place at the proper moment, for had Campbell been in another part of the field, the

\* The following is one of the rules of the great military order of Maria Theresa, of Austria :—“If a superior officer act on his own responsibility *without* orders from his chief, and, by so doing, turn the tide of war in favour of the flag, under which he serves, he, on the strength of the evidence given by his fellows, receives the commander’s cross.”



guns would have been removed, and the flank in question left naked to the attack of irresistible masses.

It was about 10 a.m. when the First and Fourth Divisions appeared on the scene of action. Lord Raglan directed that the former corps should proceed to the right, so as to cover Balaclava; and that the latter, under Sir George Cathcart, should halt below the Western heights, near the Woronzow road. Soon after these troops had reached the valley, General Canrobert presented himself, at the head of the 1st French Division, some field guns, and a brigade of *Chasseurs d'Afrique*.

While the reinforcements were in course of arrival, Lord Raglan sent his third order to the Lieutenant-General of Cavalry. It was expressed in these words: "Cavalry to advance, and take advantage of any opportunity to recover the heights. They will be supported by Infantry, which have been ordered. Advance on two fronts."\*

On receipt of this order, Lord Lucan immediately mounted his troopers—they had been allowed to dismount for the purpose of resting themselves and horses,—and moved the Division from the ground, where the recent charge had taken effect, to a more advanced position. The Heavy Brigade took post on the northern ridge of the unarmed forts (Nos. 4, 5, and 6); the Light Brigade, pushing further to the left, crossed that ridge, and drew up in the central valley,—fronting the east. Thus were the Cavalry placed almost parallel to the line of Turkish redoubts, No. 1, 2, 3, and face to face with the enemy. His preparations complete, Lucan awaited the coming of the Infantry, which (according to the Commander-in-Chief) was to "support" an attack on the heights. But not a bat-

\* I, of course, quote the version of order No. 3, which the Earl of Lucan, in his place in Parliament, positively asserted to be the true and correct version.

talion marched. So far, indeed, from exhibiting symptoms of activity, the Infantry remained perfectly at ease. The men of the Fourth Division (which was nearest to the Cavalry) had even piled arms, and "fallen out." Lord Raglan's third order was, in consequence, left undone; not (as a clique has insinuated) because the General of Cavalry was backward and unenterprising, but because the Foot do not seem to have received instructions as to the parts, they were expected to play, in the projected manoeuvre. After all, perhaps, we have little to deplore in the non-performance of this attack. We must have lost much valuable life in the endeavour to seize a position so strongly occupied, which when seized, we might not have been in a condition to maintain against vastly superior numbers.

While Lord Lucan, as far as in him lay, made arrangements for carrying out his general's commands, Liprandi was assuming a prodigiously strong defensive attitude. The Russian forces fell back into the gorge, leading toward Chorguna. On their left were redoubts, Nos. 1, 2, and 3; at the base of these was a battery of six guns. On the slopes flanking their right, a battery of eight guns, with a column of cavalry in support. Across their front was drawn a battery of twelve guns, with a large body of cavalry in rear, backed up by columns of infantry. Amidst the bushes which clothe the little heights on both sides of the valley, riflemen were plentifully scattered. It will be seen, therefore, that not only would an assailant's onset be met with a terrible point blank discharge, but would be raked with a cross fire from either flank, and stung into the bargain with the bullets of sharpshooters. Fearful odds for flesh and blood to contend against!

Now, the tremendous event of the day occurred. It would appear that Lord Raglan, noticing some movements in the captured redoubts, came to the erroneous conclusion

that the Russians were removing the guns from these works. On this supposition probably he issued his fourth order.

Captain Nolan, a bold, intelligent officer, said to be deep in the confidence of Quarter-Master-General Airey, to whom he acted as aide-de-camp, galloping up to Lord Lucan, placed in his hands the following written command (No. 4.) :—" Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, follow the enemy, and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns. Troop of Horse Artillery may accompany. French Cavalry are on your left. Immediate."

The Lieut.-General demurred ; he forcibly urged the useless hazard of such an attempt : but, to his remonstrances Nolan replied, " Lord Raglan's orders are that the cavalry attack immediately." " Where, and what ?" asked Lucan—for the enemy's columns and batteries, with the exception of a few riflemen, were above a mile off, and hidden from his view by the cut and hilly nature of the intervening ground. " There," cried Nolan, in a loud, sneering tone, pointing to the further, or eastern end of the valley—" there, my lord, is your enemy, and there are your guns."

Here was a written order unambiguously phrased, and emphatically endorsed *vivâ voce* by the *fidus Achates* of the principal staff officer of the army—was a mere general of division to fly in the face of a message so signed, sealed, and delivered ? Might not the cavalry advance thus officially enjoined, be part and parcel of some grand and subtle tactical combination, the success of which, altogether hinged on the punctual working of several intricate manœuvres ? Again, the French cavalry were stated to be " on the left ;" was it not possible, that their safety might be compromised by Lucan taking on himself to set at nought Lord Raglan's express direction ?

There was no help for it. The Commander-in-Chief must be obeyed. Accordingly, Lord Cardigan was in-

formed that the Light Brigade must push forward. His lordship expostulated. Who would not have expostulated in a predicament so ghostly? But, on hearing that the order emanated from head-quarters, that it was recorded in black and white, that it was vouched for by the significant speech and manner of Captain Nolan, he said no more: the Earl "fell in" at the head of his incomparable troopers.

The brigade was now formed in two lines, with an interval of 400 yards. In the first line glittered the 13th Light Dragoons and 17th Lancers. In the second line rode the 4th Light Dragoons (covering the 13th), and the 11th Hussars (covering the 17th); the 8th Hussars being in support. The Heavy Brigade was held in reserve to cover retreat.

All purple, and gold, and snowy plumes, the Light Horse trotted forth, Cardigan their leader. They had not proceeded many hundred yards, before Nolan darted to the front. As the first cannon opened on the little band of heroes, he waved his sword and cheered. Cheer no more, hot spirit: that boom is your knell! The splinter of a shell struck him on the breast—he threw up his arms—he uttered a wild scream—and his horse, whirling round, galloped towards the advancing line. A few files opened out, to let the wounded officer pass; and, just as his charger tore through the ranks, the impetuous Nolan fell a corpse to the ground.

Faster! faster! like a gust of wind the brigade sweeps down the valley. Presently it is within 800 yards of a posted army. The redoubts on the enemy's left hurl fire upon it. The batteries on the right hurl death and mutilation upon it. The guns in front vomit hell point blank upon it. Men are dashed from their saddles by scores; on all sides bleeding horses bolt riderless; the earth is strewn with carcasses, and with the quivering forms of gallant



men and gallant beasts. But no dismay—not a soldier swerves. Head-foremost the heroic living spur. The nearer the melting squadrons close on the Muscovites, the quicker, the thicker, fly roaring, whizing missiles, shell, shot, canister, bullets—the more horrid the massacre. Now, our dragoons are amongst the guns of the slaughterous-fronting battery. Of the gunners some are trampled down, hewn down; others avoid the avalanche by creeping underneath their pieces.

But although the direct fire has ceased, the rifles blaze away with unmitigated bitterness, and the dark line of cavalry ahead, swoops upon our paladins, now jumbled into one shapeless, riven, battered throng. For a minute or two there is furious clashing of steel, and many “grinding acts” of swordsmanship are done on both sides. But, on a sudden, it is perceived that the columns of horse and foot, ranged on the slopes to the enemy’s right, are moving into the valley, with the view of walling in the English. Back, back, now or never! With one grand impulse the glorious wreck of the Light Brigade wheels about, flings off the foe’s grip, and retreats. Skirmishers try to oppose the flight, but they are ridden down. Every pace lessening their numbers, our Hotspurs fly! See; Muscovite cavalry has drawn up across the valley. No hope; our men are doomed. Still a chance. A calm, brave soldier commands the 8th Hussars (the regiment in support). He marks how tremendous the peril is. A thought and a blow with Shewell. He rams his Hussars like a thunder-bolt at the grey-coated dragoons. Can Russians, however numerous, withstand the edge of Irish sabres? No; the mass trembles. At a heavy cost to the 8th, the mass is forced back—triumph of quality over quantity; and, thanks to the prompt decision of a good officer, all that is left of the light horse reels on; some bloody men still mounted on faint, staggering chargers;

others running a-foot ; some shakoeless, others swordless, with wounded and riderless steeds careering madly in the midst. Here the heavy Dragoons interpose to cover retreat. With admirable steadiness they push between their comrades and the enemy ; and, sternly confronting that terrible fire, many a brave fellow drops in the ranks of the Greys and Royals.

Nor were our allies slack in stretching forth a helping arm. Although General Morris (in command of French cavalry) does not appear to have been instructed relative to the fourth order addressed to Lord Lucan ; an order, be it recollected, in which special reference was made to the French cavalry ; he (Morris) no sooner descried how seriously the brigade Cardigan was jeopardized, than like a loyal brother-in-arms, he decided on striking a blow for its extrication. To this end, three squadrons of that celebrated horse, Chasseurs d'Afrique, under General D'Allonville, an officer of Algerian repute, were let fly at the battery on the Russian right ; a happy blow ! Up the broken and rugged ascent the barbs climbed with the agility of cats ; and, in a few seconds, the French cavaliers were among the cannon, slashing men, and hamstringing horses. While engaged thus profitably, a column of infantry (which had lain hidden hitherto) sprang up, and sent a volley into the Chasseurs, who, nothing daunted, rode at the foot, and fought a hard fight with it, till the trumpet sounded the recall. This vigorous bout completely succeeded. The battery, which had been blowing to atoms the disordered remnant of the Light Brigade, and also severely damaging the heavy regiments covering the retreat, was silenced, but not without heavy loss to the Chasseurs. Unquestionably to the promptitude of General Morris, to the skill of D'Allonville, and to the audacity of the mere "sworders" do we owe it, that so many of our light horsemen returned to tell their imperishable tale.

Out of the 670 Light Dragoons that charged into that deadly *cul-de-sac*, there were, in little more than twenty minutes, killed, wounded, or made prisoners—21 officers, 23 sergeants, 7 trumpeters, 227 rank and file. Total casualties, 278. Horses killed or lost, 335.

We mourn this awful catastrophe, and yet we glory in it. We weep the blood that was fruitlessly poured out, but we exult in the iron-hearted courage, the unfaltering devotion, the sublime sense of duty which impelled the brigade Cardigan, to measure swords with a posted army, to challenge almost inevitable death. Never perhaps did British valour shine out with a ray so pure, a splendour so martyr-like. Let those who struck in the *melée*, narrate the ghastly details of the strife, tell which officer did better or worse than another, which trooper fetched the strongest blows at the amazed Russian gunners. This unready pen can only attempt to record the exploits of the *men* at large, the prowess of the mass. The praise or blame of the individual *man*, I leave to writers abler and better informed than myself.

Here the curtain may drop over Balaclava, its ill-starred heroism, and its great disaster. The peerless onset of the light cavalry was the culminating point of the tragedy. After a few feelers here and there, an inconclusive movement or two, performed by our 4th division, Liprandi destroyed redoubts Nos. 2 and 3, carried off the seven ship-guns, with which the hapless Turks had attempted to defend what was, virtually, indefensible, and assumed a strong position under shelter of Canrobert's hill. On their side, the allied generals, having relinquished all intention of forcibly re-occupying the ridge, were solely intent on taking up a less extensive, and, therefore, more judicious line of defence for Balaclava—immediately to the north of Kadi-Koi.

The First French Division was kept on the alert throughout the night, in order to lend aid to Sir Colin

Campbell in case of a renewed attack ; and the garrison of Balac-lava was strengthened by the addition of the Highland Brigade. At dusk, the division of Cathcart and the Guards returned to their old quarters, on the heights before Sevastopol.

The total loss sustained by the allies, in front of Balac-lava, was as follows :—

		Officers		Sergeants— Rank and File.		Total.
English	...	40	...	386	...	426
French	...	2	...	50	...	52
Turks	...	9	...	250	...	259
Grand Total						737 men
						409 horses.

The Russian loss is supposed to have been close on 600 men, of whom the major part bit the dust under the broad-swords of the English heavy cavalry, which, owing to the ability exerted in their conduct, bled but little in that superb charge. It was in shielding the recoil of the Light Brigade that two heavy corps—the Greys and Royals—suffered so grievously.

Who gained the day ? Not Liprandi, certainly, for he missed his aim. He possessed tactical knowledge. He could move troops well, but he lacked enterprise. He shilly-shalleyed, when he should have struck hard, hence he lost a prize—Balac-lava remained untouched. Nor can the British claim a triumph. They retained Balac-lava—but how ? They lost position, they lost guns, they had to abandon the Woronzow Road—greatest deprivation of all. The 25th of October, 1854, may be set down as the date of a drawn fight, the failures of which were pretty equally divided between the combatants : the honours of which undoubtedly belonged to the English trooper.



From first to last, the battle of Balaclava was a tissue of blunders. At a time when our means were straightened, when but 5,000 men—*colluvies omnium gentium*—could be spared for the protection of a vital point, an extended line of defence (untenable unless guarded by 20,000 good troops), was decided upon ; the earth-works thrown up to crown that line of defence, were despicable, both as to design and execution ; were, moreover, weakly armed, and slightly occupied by crude levies, without supports of any kind. Ought not a recollection of these facts—a recollection of the immense force with which the Russian fell to on that morning—to secure, if not sympathy, at least justice, for the friendless Turks, to whom unassisted and alone, we confided the charge of those distant heights ? Instead of shifting the blame of our reverses to the shoulders of men who are unable to vindicate themselves, we ought frankly to acknowledge the military errors, into which professional inexperience had betrayed us, to confess that the Turks were placed in a false position, to commend the sturdy resistance which they assuredly made on Canrobert's Hill, and to deplore the fate of nine Ottoman officers, and 250 soldiers killed or wounded out of less than 1,200 in or near the unfortunate redoubts.

We come next to a consideration of the manner in which trust-worthy information, that Liprandi had at last resolved to attack the base of the British operations—a determination by no means to be wondered at—was dealt with.

About 11 a.m. on the 24th, a scout employed by the Pacha commanding the Ottoman brigade, apprised Lord Lucan and Sir Colin Campbell that 20,000 Russian Infantry, about 5,000 Cavalry, and more than 30 guns, would be upon Balaclava the next morning. This important news was at once despatched to Head-Quarters by an active aide-de-camp, who, on his return there—

from to the cavalry camp, informed Lord Lucan "that he (aide-de-camp) had delivered the letter to General Airey, who made no reply, and that he subsequently met Lord Raglan, who only said that "if there was anything new, it was to be reported to him." There the matter rested. The spy's startling intelligence—supervening on the knowledge that for some time past a Russian army-corps had been lurking in the gorges of Chorguna—would appear to have excited a slighter degree of apprehension on the heights before Sevastopol, than in the camp before Kadi-Koi. No infantry was held, it is stated, in readiness on the night of the 24th, to move into the valley at the shortest notice ; and, although the Russian Artillery opened on the Turkish redoubts before seven a.m., on the 25th—a proof how truly the scout had spoken—it was nearly nine a.m., before the First and Fourth Divisions commenced their march upon the assailed point. Much that is dark and inscrutable about the Balaclava question might be cleared up, if the reasons which influenced this part of the Commander-in-Chief's course of action were laid bare ; but the secret history of the 25th of October '54—a narrative which would prove no less interesting to the civilian than pregnant with instruction to the soldier—may not, perhaps, be told in our day.

A few words on orders Nos. 3 and 4, upon which so much discussion has arisen. The phraseology of No. 3 is plain enough : "Cavalry to advance, and take advantage of any opportunity to recover the heights. They will be supported by infantry, which have been ordered. Advance on two fronts." Here, we have instructions for a combined movement, a movement in which infantry was to participate with cavalry. Is it possible to construe this language in any other way? Well, Lord Lucan does advance his division, does make preparations

for acting in concert with the infantry ; but, to his amazement, the Lieutenant-General perceives that the foot continues motionless ; that, in lieu of coming to his support, the soldiers of the division nearest at hand (the Fourth) have piled their arms, have fallen out of the ranks, and are either sitting or lying in groups on the ground. Now, according to what maxim of war, what rule of common-sense, was Lord Lucan to set aside this standstill of the infantry, and, by engaging the enemy single-handed, to precipitate the hideous disaster which subsequently befell ? Can there be the remotest doubt that the General did prudently in waiting for his supports ? In considering this important message, one is led to inquire what was the exact purport of the directions transmitted by Lord Raglan to Cathcart and the Duke of Cambridge. Did those officers receive any instructions at all with reference to this particular order ?

Attempts have been made to insinuate a link between the command alluded to above, and the final command (No. 4), of which I repeat the text—"Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, follow the enemy, and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns. Troop of Horse Artillery may accompany. French cavalry is on your left. Immediate !"

It would, certainly, be difficult to prove relationship between these two succinct and plainly worded orders. The former obviously relates to a manœuvre to be performed by horse and foot conjointly. The latter, excluding all mention of infantry, prescribes a line of duty for the British Cavalry *per se*, hints at the co-operation of French cavalry, and suggests the employment of Horse Artillery.

Everything connected with order No. 4 unites to render its meaning incontrovertible. Are not the terms, which enjoin a rapid advance to the front, clear and stringent ?

Was not Lord Raglan, when he wrote, dictated, or, at any rate, sanctioned the instructions in question, standing on an eminence affording an excellent view of the field of battle? And then, for the sake of argument, supposing there to have been ambiguity about any of the written expressions, would not that ambiguity have been dispelled by the peculiar manner and emphatic speech of the bearer of the message? No mere dinner table aide-de-camp was that bearer, be it remembered; but the trusted *adlatus* of the Quarter-Master-General of the army. Now, his every word, his every gesture, the very precautions he took—such as tightening his horse's girths, and securing the attendance of an orderly dragoon—tend to show that Captain Nolan, the highly gifted staff officer who, a minute before, was at Lord Raglan's side, understood the General-in-Chief's (or Sir Richard Airey's) unequivocal language—in all respects as Lord Lucan understood it—to be imperative, to signify combat, immediate, straight-forward combat. What, indeed, could be the result of a "rapid advance" against heights bristling with men and cannon, unless stiff fighting?

If Lucan—disregarding the plain English of the order, ignoring the fact that his commander, being stationed on high ground, was better able to form a judgment as to the proceedings of the enemy than he (Lucan) could be, overlooking the evidence (so strongly indicative of Lord Raglan's intentions) which Nolan orally supplied—had declined to carry out the Head-Quarter command, what would have been the consequence? Why, that the whole blame of the day's mischance would have been imputed to the unadventurous character or gross disobedience of the cavalry General. "At a critical moment," people might say, "a division leader was required to undertake an offensive movement; but, strange to tell, he slighted the most explicit, the most simple *written* directions, he forgot the

first duty of a soldier—obedience to the orders of a superior officer—hence, the mortifying winding up of the battle of Balaclava, hence, the loss of the Woronzow road, the loss of the eastern redoubts, and of the ship-guns.”

One who knew the human heart well, Samuel Butler, has told us—

“Great Commanders only own  
What's prosp'rous, by the soldier done.”

Is that fair play? Had the glorious effort of the Light Cavalry been crowned with success, about whose brows would the Horse Guards have wreathed the laurel? The General-in-Chief, whose genius decreed the feat, would *more solito*, have worn the bays. On the same principle, the responsibility of the failure of that astonishing feat might seem to appertain to the Commander, at whose instance it was taken in hand.

It is painful to call in question any thought, word, or deed, of the noble dead; but it is yet more painful to see the living loaded, as I honestly believe, with undeserved obloquy.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## ACTION OF OCTOBER 26.

Forces issue from the town—Valiant conduct of the picquets—Guns on Shell Hill—Sir De Lacy Evans's preparations—We open fire—2nd Division hunting—Hewitt's shots—Losses on both sides—The enemy's object—Canrobert's opinion of the combat—Justice to the soldier—Insecurity of the right flank—Remonstrances of General Evans—Noble bearing of the wounded—Ambulance waggons—Tit-for-tat—Dutch courage—Jack's trophy—Every man his own general—*Alerte* and its consequences—A woman's gift—The M. P.'s wound—A rough joker—Alma despatch—Distribution of praise—Mr. Russell's account of the battle—Ammunition scarce—Where shall we winter?—Hot work again—13-inch shell—Furious outburst—Awkward position in the trenches—Turks at work—"Onions, I declare!"—Guns on the move—Labour in vain.

OCTOBER 26.—More fighting. Soon after day-light, the enemy opened a heavy fire along his entire front upon our batteries; little came of it, however, for the covering parties hugged the earth closely, and so the angry iron whirled all but impotently over their heads.

About 12 a. m., a considerable force of infantry, supported by two batteries of artillery (numbering, altogether, 18 pieces) and two squadrons of Cossack cavalry, was seen to issue from Sevastopol into the valley of Inkermann. For a while, there was speculation amongst

the officers and soldiers looking on, as to the purpose of this corps. Was it bound for the Belbec or Simpheropol? Could it mean mischief to the allied position? But, ere long, all doubts were set at rest. Happily for our glory, disastrously for himself, the Muscovite turned into the track leading up to the Second Division camp.

The enemy pressed rapidly forward, and in a few minutes his 10,000 men were at blows with about 200 soldiers belonging to the 30th and 49th regiments. An army-corps, was contending, *à l'outrance*, with a couple of picquets! Goliath of Gath came swaggering on, and yet little David quailed not. Resolute to do their duty, to sacrifice themselves, if need be, *pro bono publico*, those stubborn fellows of the 30th and 49th, bravely led by Captains Atcherley and Bailey, Lieutenant Connolly, and Sergeant Sullivan, fell fiercely on the skirmishers that covered the Russian advance, and, after a smart fight, beat them back in confusion on the heads of their columns. After this exploit, our heroes began to retire—not precipitately, but slowly, face to face with the foe, obstinately contesting every vantage ground, and ultimately rejoined their regiments, with the loss of 10 men killed and nearly 50 wounded; among the latter were all the officers engaged, the fiery Connolly being desperately hurt in a hand-to-hand struggle with two riflemen. \*

While the picquets waged this unequal fight, the Russian artillerymen were working hard to get guns in position on a hill called Cossack or Shell Hill, which commanded the 2nd Division camp; but, with all their masterly despatch—in everything concerning the serving of ordnance the Muscov is, beyond doubt, a master—

\* For this daring feat Brevet-Major Connolly has, in the eleventh hour, received the cross of valour. It is to be regretted that an honour so nobly merited, was not more promptly conferred.

they were behind hand this time. They had entered the lists with a General, whose head was clear as his heart was stout. Before, then, their batteries were quite adjusted, the field-pieces of the 1st and 2nd Divisions—18 in number—were in tune; all the available soldiery of the 2nd Division lay under the crest of the ridge in front of their tents (consequently the troops were invisible from Shell Hill), ready for a spring; the Guards' Brigade was marching up to secure the right flank; Bosquet, with 5 battalions, was likewise on the move; thus Evans was armed at all points, thanks to his own lightning vigour and to the precision of his *coup d'œil*.

Presently, the British fire opened; admirably worked our guns rained so well sustained, and so well aimed a fire on the enemy's artillery, that in less than half-an-hour not a Russian cannon remained on the hill top. No sooner did Sir De Lacy mark the retreat of the batteries, than he turned his guns on the Infantry now looming black on the mountain side. Seldom had field-pieces easier practice; every round told on the living target. Mowed down with shot, scourged with Minié bullets, the foe faltered. The moment has come for that redoubted division of Evans's to be let slip. It sprang from its lair. It dashed forward. The Russians showed little or no fight. They rushed wildly hither and thither. Many a hapless wretch, in his mad terror, casting himself headlong over the cliffs into the gorge beneath. It was a rare sight to watch those columns in flight. The enemy were taken on both flanks. On the right, the 41st, led keenly by Colonel Percy Herbert, drove the broken battalions hurry-scurry into the valley. On the left the 30th and 95th, pressing like blood-hounds on the heels of the horror-struck throng, hunted it well nigh to the outskirts of the town.

It was now, that a young mate of the navy, named Hewitt, did splendid service. He had charge of a Lancaster

gun, which, from its situation, was at one time so seriously menaced by the Russian skirmishers, that the lad received orders to spike it and retire. He obeyed. He spiked the gun—with a leaden plug, hammered out of a Minié bullet. But no sooner were the enemy in trouble, than the quick-witted Hewitt returned to his Lancaster, cleared out the filled up touch-hole with a penknife, slewed the piece round, blew out a lateral embrasure, and, with admirable aim and rapidity, pitched murderous shot upon the scared battalions jostling into the suburbs of Sevastopol.\* For this act, "My Lords," with a readiness unusual to them when simple merit is concerned, promoted the noble youngster to be Lieutenant. He is now one of the most deserving of the distinguished men who wear the V. C.

In the combat of 26th October, 10,000 Russians were routed in one hour-and-a-half by 2,000 soldiers of the second division. The Muscovites, according to General Canrobert's estimate (which is certainly not over the mark), lost about 1,000 men, of whom 100 were made prisoners, and 300 left dead on the ground near the position. The English had 13 killed, and 70 wounded.

It may be, that the Russians pushed this grand sortie with a two-fold object in view. 1. They might have been desirous of ascertaining the character, locality, and power of the masked defensive works, which they took for granted protected the allied right. 2. In the event of the sortie succeeding in surprising the picket and division in support, it is probable that they intended to throw up a battery on Shell Hill, which, as we know, dominates the Inkermann valley, and faces the ridges behind which Evans's troops were camped. The fact, that quantities of intrenching tools were thrown away by the fugitives, goes

\* The above differs slightly from the official account of Hewitt's gallant deed. I tell the tale just as I heard it a few days after the combat.

far to warrant this hypothesis. As to the first point, Menschikoff bought valuable information at an exceedingly dear rate. He discovered (to his amazement, doubtless,) that the Inkermann flank of the position was open, unguarded by redoubts or defences of any kind. With regard to the second point—the hope of fastening upon ground, whence he might harass, perhaps destroy, our camps—the Russian General was baffled by the intrepidity with which two slight picquets checked the progress of his assaulting corps, and the consummate ability with which Sir De Lacy Evans converted that check into utter rout.

The sharp and decisive fight of October 26th, has not received the consideration which it merits. But the future historian of the War in the Crimea will tell of no exploit more praiseworthy. On this occasion, there was an union of officer-like skill with soldier-like daring. While the rank and file struck, the General thought, devised, schemed. To a seasonable combination, then, of intellect and of valour we owe it, that one weak division beat off a most formidable attack; that, notwithstanding the great disparity in point of numbers, the English casualties were comparatively trifling, while the enemy's loss was great. In a dispatch to the French Minister-of-War (dated Oct. 27th, 1854), General Canobert sums up a report of this action thus:—"This short, but smart affair of Sir De Lacy Evans's, was most brilliant, and has certainly compensated for the painful incidents of the previous day (Balaclava)."

A singular act of justice crowned the glories of the first battle of Inkermann. In his descriptive dispatch, Sir De Lacy Evans reported the signal bravery and conduct displayed by Sergeant Sullivan, of the 30th Regiment, in the opening brush of the picquets; nor was the General content with hollow praise; he continued to exert himself so vigorously in Sullivan's behalf, that the Horse Guards were, at last, induced to gazette that meritorious non-



commissioned officer to an ensigncy. This was the first Crimean instance of a soldier's name enriching a public dispatch.

As the repeated reports, wherein General Evans demonstrated to the authorities the defencelessness of the right flank, had been disregarded hitherto ; so did this ominous attack fail to establish a necessity for spades and more bayonets. It was not till after the crisis of the 5th of November, that the armourers could be brought to solder the flaw in the English harness.

The brigade of Guards not being required to take an active part in the combat, the "hairy caps" had nothing to do, except to watch the wounded as they limped, or were carried on stretchers, to the rear. In general, the behaviour of these poor fellows was wonderful—the very reverse of what might have been looked for. Far from drooping in spirit, most of them were in buoyant spirits. Sometimes, a fine youth with a badly fractured arm, hurried lustily as he passed ; sometimes a "stout Widdrington," whose thigh a round shot had smashed, would, faint as he was, raise himself up a little on his litter, and brandish his rifle triumphantly. I observed that nearly every man, whether slightly or sorely hurt, still clutched his musket ; that the Miniés remained even in the grasp of those who were borne along stark and inanimate. A bullet through the heart alone conquers such soldiers.

There was one of the newly arrived ambulance waggons standing hard by. It was commendable for little else than solidity of construction ; space would seem to have been over-much economised at the expense of ventilation. Into this caravan the gasping wounded were so closely packed—on trays, one above the other—that it is difficult to imagine how the unfortunates escaped suffocation, in their slow and jolting transit from the field to the hospital-tent. An intelligent corporal, who, by reason of a

severe contusion, was compelled to journey in this huge moving "chest of drawers," told me "its berths were all but unbearable, from heat, stench, and want of air."

A "Roland for an Oliver." The Russian (or rather German) officer, who had the honour of laying hands on Lord Dunkellin, was himself captured on this occasion; he stated that his lordship (whose agreeable social qualities he warmly praised) had left Sevastopol for Moscow. The Polish prisoners (of whom many seemed by no means to despond in their bondage) declared that the delusive gleam of success which yesterday gilded the Russian arms, was the prime mover of to-day's attack; and that to inflame them to fiery conflict with the "red devils," two stimulants, which most powerfully excite the sluggish soul of the Muscovite serf—viz., religious artifice and *quass*—were freely administered to the men "told off" for the fray.

OCT. 27.—Nothing of importance in the front. The fire very slack on both sides. The weather has changed for the better; we thank God for sunshine and warm weather—boons which the ragged and tented alone can duly appreciate. I have heard an amusing instance of reckless salt-water "pluck." A "blue-jacket," chivalrously anxious to obtain a genuine trophy from the person of a *living* "Rooshian," chanced to catch sight of a big, flat-capped, long-coated Calmuck, dodging among the bushes and stones near the naval battery. Like a shot Jack leaps through the embrasure, and away, over the open, after Johnny Russ, who, finding himself pursued, takes likewise to his heels. It is a short, and unfair race; it is a shorter and more unfair encounter. In a few seconds, the nimble-footed seaman is aboard the lubberly marksman; has griped him by the nape of the neck, has shaken him as the pedagogue shakes a stupid school-boy, has wrested the musket out of his hand, has applied a valedictory

kick or two to the terrified creature's posteriors, and is back again in the battery, with the coveted prize so honestly won. When asked by his messmates, "how it was he hadn't brought the *henemi* along with him," our hero replied "Why, what 'ud have been the good on him, poor chap, don't you see as how I've got his firelock; them sodgers be worse nor lumber, when you've taken their *harms* from 'em."

A friend has just told me an anecdote which shows that some, at least, of the private soldiers are aware of the pre-eminent parts they have hitherto played in our operations. Two comrades, belonging to a distinguished regiment of — Division, discussed the siege as follows:—

Tom (an Englishman): "Well, Barney, d'ye think them generals and hingeniers what draws the plans, knows when this ere b—— town will be taken?"

Barney (a Connaught "boy"): "Sorra' a bit; them ginirals and officers knows jist as much, but divil an ounce more, concernin' it, than us poor min does. Wasn't we all, anyway, on an aqual footin' at the battle of Alma? Wasn't I, meself, a giniral takin' command of yez, jist as well as ould ——, in that illigant ruction?" An audacious fellow, this common soldier; he knew his value!

OCT. 28.—Toward 12 o'clock last night a brisk musketry fire was heard in our rear. Of course the Divisions nearest at hand got under arms, and "doubled" to the crest of the heights (looking towards the Tchernaiia). On arriving there, all we could elicit from the picket officers was—that the sentries had heard noises in the valley below. After waiting with chattering teeth a full hour for those noises to assume palpable shapes, we marched back to the tents. The sequel of the *alerte* was exceeding satisfactory. With the first light of day more than 100 Russian troophorses, all bridled and saddled, trotted quietly up to



our outposts. What brought them there? What connexion had they with the recent "turn out?" Had they been deserted by their craven riders in a panic? Had they, under the influence of some unaccountable excitement, broken away from their picket-pins?—are questions impossible to answer. It is enough to know that, being strong, well-conditioned beasts, they served to remount many of the bold dragoons, whom Balaclava had forced to descend from their high horses.

A sharp-shooting captain has shown to me a little crochet tobacco-pouch, which he took from the pocket of a Muscovite officer slain in a paltry skirmish two or three days ago. As we were admiring the pretty bag, a letter dropped therefrom. It was written in Russian, evidently by a woman's hand. Here was a home-thrust. A simple tale of tears, of crushed hopes, of blighted affections, which set some of those that stood by a thinking, with moistened eyes and softened hearts. It is retail affliction, rather than wholesale calamity, which most powerfully affects human sensibilities. The man who has wandered perfectly unmoved through acres of carnage—the reeking battle-field—weeps over the coffin of a little child. The *blouses* of the Faubourg St. Antoine, who saw their brethren blown to atoms by Cavaignac, and never so much as sighed, have been observed sobbing like maids of sixteen over the pathetic "situations" of a Porte St. Martin melodrama.

The Hon. Major Maxwell, M.P., 50th Regiment, escaped death on the 26th instant, in a manner perfectly miraculous. I give the account of as great a curiosity of a wound as ever soldier smarted with, in the gallant member's own words. "I was on duty in the first line of trenches, (left attack) and, sitting under cover of the parapet, was in the act of breakfasting, when a *ricochet* 39-pounder just cleared the top above my head, and dropped into the trench, taking away my cap, and a

portion of the pericranium, leaving the bone of the skull bare, and causing a rush of blood, which, however, suddenly stopped. The shot was stopped by the bank in rear of the trench, and rolled back to my feet. I was obliged to remain some hours in the trenches owing to the heavy fire kept up till night-fall. Erysipelas in the head and face came on three days afterwards, and so I was ordered on board ship."

The Russian device of throwing shot and shell with a charge of powder so nicely calculated, that the ball has force enough to reach the trench, and no more, was cunningly schemed, for the purpose of getting at the coverers squatting under the parapet; but, inasmuch as the slightest error in the quantity of powder, would cast the projectile either over the mark or under the mark, the military results of the dodge were not always so inimically satisfactory as in the case of poor Maxwell; indeed, I am told that one of those weakly missiles, came not only to a lame and impotent, but positively low-comedy conclusion. According to the tale of an Artillery Major, half-a-dozen officers were one day seated tailor-like at dinner under the shade of the stout gabions in Chapman's battery. As a member of the party, the surgeon I believe, was stretching out on his hands and knees in the ditch, to borrow a "tot" (mug) from a messmate, squatted lower down in the row, a shot (which had lighted unperceived on the parapet overhead) rolling dead into the trench, came in contact with an undignified region of the doctor's person, just then in very prominent relief. Sorely bruised by the heavy blow, fiercely exasperated at what he took for a *mauvaise plaisanterie*, up leaped the good man, and began to scold his companions in no measured strain, for their, supposed, impertinent familiarity. Judge of the amazement that crept o'er the mantling visage of the accuser, when the denounced, warmly repudiating a levity (?) so practical



and unseasonable, pointed to a pretty weighty ball lying in the mud at their feet, as the real cause of the offensive bump.

Great excitement in camp to-day. The *Times* containing the Alma despatch, the Minister of War's eulogistic reply thereto, and "Our own Correspondent's" account of the battle has arrived. With regard to the Commander-in-Chief's report, it is generally considered a lucid statement; nevertheless, some regimental radicals seem disposed to criticize Lord Raglan's distribution of encomium. "The sunshine of his Lordship's praise pours," they say, "in a flood upon the nominal great, while the working small come in only for a sickly beam or two." Of course; such is the regulation in the British army. Mean fellows trudging in the ranks must not expect their doings to be extolled with the fervour that proclaims the valour and conduct of more pretentious, higher born, but peradventure, not more profitable servants. Soldiers who win victory for England, give ear to what Dean Swift says on this subject—and be comforted. "I had often read of some great services done to princes and states, and desired to see the persons by whom those services had been performed. Upon inquiry, I was told that 'their names were to be found on no record except a few of them, whom history has represented as the vilest of rogues, and traitors.' For the rest I had never once heard of them. They all appeared with dejected looks, and in the meanest habits, most of them telling me, 'they died in poverty and disgrace.'" (*Gulliver's Travels*.)

Of Mr. Russell's story of the Alma, I hear but one opinion—that it is a marvel, a literary curiosity. What a keen intellect, what a disciplined mind must that man possess, who, though new to war, and its delirious excitements, could sit down, amidst bloodshed and destruction, and calmly write such graphic truths.

OCT. 29.—The fire of both Russian and allied batteries languishes more and more; indeed, all martial activity seems now to be concentrated in the ships, which by fits and starts toss volleys of enormous 13-inch shells ("Whistling Dicks" the sailors call them) into our works. The drowsy duello certainly suits our purpose; inasmuch as it enables us to husband ammunition, which is uncomfortably scarce, and to give the overtaxed artillerymen something approaching to a rest; the guns, too, are none the worse for a cooling respite. Nor does the enemy omit to turn this semi-calm to his profit. He may be seen at work, strengthening his bastions on all points; but it is in front of the French batteries that the most busy-bee exertions are going on. A belief gains ground on the plateau, even among some who, hitherto, have been very sanguine, that "the place will not be taken this winter." I perpetually hear intelligent officers, both French and English, avowing this opinion; and, in truth, looking at the present formidableness of the fortifications of Sevastopol, bearing in mind the prodigious stores of cannon and munitions of all kinds which Menschikoff evidently has at command—his lavish expenditure proves the abundance of his means—considering the large re-inforcements which he has recently received, keeping in view the unprecedented position in which the allies are now placed—besieging and being besieged, bombarding in front, and fighting for very existence in rear—recalling to mind what history tells of the stubborn fortitude of the Muscovite military character, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that our armies must *nolens volens*, winter in the Crimea. But yet, with reasons so many and so powerful, pointing to our detention here for six months to come, we hear of no official preparations going on to meet the inevitable rigour of the approaching season, not even an attempt—I verily believe—to restore to the soldiers their abstracted knapsacks; neither have

the squad-bags, stored at Scutari, been sent for: nowhere, the sign of "a stitch in time!" Can it be possible that the hand-writing on the wall, so easily read by the herd, continues undecypherable at head-quarters? The ill-clad British, "with belly gaunt, and famished face," drift into rain, snow, ice; and the administration either procrastinates, or is stone blind.

The weather has changed; again a raw pinching wind, whistling through the ragged slops, rasps our fleshless bones.

OCT. 30.—Nothing either fresh or fierce "in the front." The French are arming a new work nearer the place, than any battery that has hitherto engaged the enemy. We look with interest to the opening of this work, although the number of those who anticipate a decisive effect therefrom is not large.

Sir De Lacy Evans met with a mishap yesterday, his horse fell with him, as he was riding at a sharp pace. This accident, supervening on the exhausting disease against which he had been struggling for the past week, has compelled the most expert General of Division in the Army temporarily to resign his command to General Pennefather, and to go on ship-board at Balaclava for the restoration of his health. Not only his own troops, but the army generally, pray that Sir De Lacy's absence from amongst them may be brief. He is far too open-eyed and practised a commander to be spared.

OCT. 31.—Extreme languor toward Sevastopol. At present we only return shots; when it suits the enemy to be silent, our batteries are politely dumb. "Don't hit me, and I won't hit you," as schoolboys say. The sanatory condition of the army ought to be a subject of deepest anxiety to John Bull's agents out here; disease is spreading widely among the troops. At present the soldier is mainly on scurvy-breeding diet—salt pork—



to counteract the deleterious effects of which neither vegetables nor lime-juice are served out ; only biscuit and occasionally rice, which last most of us know by bitter experience, to be, in a remedial sense, all but useless. The malady is by this time too deeply rooted to be plucked out with so gentle a twitch. What does a *tisane* profit a man in brain fever ?

NOVEMBER 1-2.—An awakening. The batteries fought furiously to-day. The French began it, by firing heartily from their newly-laid cannon. The English took up the game with the energy of yore, nor were the Russians slow in responding ; accordingly, we—the coverers in Gordon's battery—had an unusually warm tour of duty. While the storm lasted, we stuck like barnacles to the gabions, thereby evading a good deal of the mischief intended for us, and yet, prudent as events have made the men, there was no hiding entirely from the 13-inch shells, which the Russian ships expend with the utmost liberality at present. Picture to yourself, O reader, the soldiers munching their dinners under the lee of the parapet, without a thought about the round shot that, singing over their heads, bound frantically to the rear. Suddenly, however, the equanimity of the meal is turned topsy-turvy. At that ominous cry, "Look out!"—from the sapper on watch, every soldier pitching away junk and biscuit, casts himself face downward in the ditch ; next moment, there is a massy thump on the ground a few yards off. No mistaking what that means. For a few seconds, the men bite the dust in intense suspense ; then, a sharp crash, and splinters of a vast bomb have sped here, there, and everywhere. The radiation of these mortiferous particles being generally upward, men lying flat on the earth, are likely to escape harm. The explosion over, the "coverers" arise, pick their victuals out of the dirt, and return to their repast, as if nothing had happened.

Bodies of Ottoman troops are now employed as working parties in our trenches. It is too much the fashion to abuse as cowards and drones these poor long suffering men. Since luckless Balaclava, where certainly they were "more sinned against than sinning," the Turks have got more kicks than fair play from both English and French.

At nightfall the cannonade ceased, and we were at peace ; and now our object was to find a sheltered nook in which to pass the night. As chance ordained it, two or three of us were so fortunate as to stumble upon a half empty powder magazine. Into this warm hut we crept, and, stretching ourselves on the ammunition boxes, enjoyed unusually comfortable repose. Had a shell tumbled upon our roof, we might have hurried in a very fragmentary condition—heads, legs, arms, trunks *sparsim*—"to that bourne whence no traveller returns."

We paid for the night's rest. An hour before light the enemy let out from all his embrasures at the English and French batteries. An accursed situation—noise head-splitting, blackness pitchy, naught visible but the meteor flashing of shells, and a thin glowing band of flame, as if of red-hot iron, denoting where the guns of Sevastopol lay. The Russians could not possibly have begun their daily labours at a more inconvenient moment, as far as we were concerned. It was close upon the time when the guard was relieved in the English works ; consequently, the incoming troops, being already on the march, must necessarily be exposed to the tempest of projectiles sweeping the ground in front and rear of the two "attacks." This was not all. Owing to the excessive toil to which for long they had been subjected, the artillerymen were sometimes permitted to retire from the batteries, to the camp, for the night, returning, of course, to work at day-break. In accordance with this arrangement, they had



quitted us last evening, and were still absent from their guns; it was, therefore, out of our power to reply to this insulting outburst. All we could do was to grin and bear it, to pray for comrades at present on the march, and to cast in our minds, how we might contrive to get our own fellows safely off, on their being relieved.

It was time to be doing. The new detachments, after suffering sadly from the shot and shell, which had harried them throughout their progress, were now pouring into the battery. So we must clear out. As the hill in rear of the trenches was still under the most terrible of ploughs, and as the ships were positively pitching shell by cart loads upon the Woronzow road, it seemed advisable to try a new route home. I therefore directed my company to bolt from the trench in single file, with an interval of about ten paces between each man, and to make *ventre à terre* for the ravine to the right, (of "the attack") which appeared to be comparatively free from the enemy's attentions. The scheme succeeded; every one of my noble fellows answered his name at the appointed rendezvous, and we marched joyful to our tents. It is impossible to describe my thankfulness to God, for having brought that company scathless out of the fiery furnace, wherein so many Englishmen perished.

Although the shock of the cannonade was mainly felt by the relieving regiments (19th, and Rifles, I believe) which had to breast it, as a man breasts a hail storm in an open treeless field, the trenches themselves were not unstained with blood. Among other horrid deaths, I saw a soldier cut cleanly in three parts by a shell first lighting, and then, bursting on his body, as he lay at the bottom of the ditch. It would be unjust not to mention the promptitude and calm resolution with which the surgeons bound up wounds, and assuaged the torments of the dying under this very hot fire.

It is supposed that a sergeant, who deserted a day or two ago, has imparted to the Russians the hour at which his countrymen are relieved in the batteries ; hence, the nicely timed and unusually destructive bombardment of the morning.

Nov. 3-4.—On picket in the redoubt which Canrobert built for the defence of the rear of the position. The Cossack videttes are dotted here and there along the line of the Tchernaiia, and occasionally large numbers of carts, *arabas*, and camels, escorted by cavalry, may be seen passing in and out of the gorges, at the opposite side of the valley. A Turkish battalion has been all day spade in hand, putting the polishing touches to this important work, and, in general, the men have stuck assiduously to their tasks. I was diverted with the peremptory means adopted by the *Talimci* (Adjutant) to prevent the activity of his soldiers from hanging fire ; one weather-beaten old fellow who was perhaps bending his back less diligently than was proper, this energetic officer sent spinning into the ditch, with a pair of ringing buffets, which Ben Caunt or the Tipton Slasher would not have disdained to father. Another delinquent was startled from a serene, but transgressive dalliance, with his chibouk, by a kick astern, which was as the kick of a Flanders mare. While the Osmanli drudged under the argus-eyed superintendence of their zealous gangster, the tumid *Bimbashi* (Colonel) in command, sat unconcernedly on a soft bit of turf, hard by, smoking a nargiléh and conversing with a very intelligent corporal of British Sappers, who had picked up no despicable smattering of Turkish during his stay at Scutari and in Bulgaria.

Within the last week, certain draughts of officers and men have arrived from England. Some of these Johnny Raws still fat and rosy with beef and porter, seemed rather shocked with the uncomely looks and unmannerly appetites

of the grisly warriors surrounding them. One of the fledglings chanced to make his war *début* on this picquet. Nothing appeared to excite his interest, much less astonishment, till the dinner hour came round. Then, was that *mens æqua in arduis* disturbed. As the servants set a steaming jorum of pungent Portugal onions beside the habitual pork and biscuit, an exclamation of horror burst from the lips of our exquisite. "Why, you fellows surely don't mean to eat onions!" What a proof of Crimean novitiate! It is plain, Sir, that you never sickened in the jungle of Aladyn, that you neither landed at Old Fort nor crossed the Alma. No diarrhœa has wasted your goodly person, blood has not spirted from the gums whenever tooth-brush was on duty in your dainty mouth. When it is recollected that the army began to rot about this time for want of vegetable food, the predilection felt by the "old hands" for the unfrequent and odorous onion will scarcely be marvelled at.

As I was going my rounds at 2 a.m. (on the 4th), an outlying sentry informed me "he thought he heard guns moving in the valley." It was, of course, quite dark, with little or no wind, therefore, I laid my ear to the ground, and listened. Yes, that peculiar rumble was unmistakeable—artillery was on the march; seemingly toward Inkermann.

It would appear too, as though the enemy were anxious to divert attention from their proceedings, for every now and then the sounds ceased. There was dead silence for perhaps ten minutes, and then, the heavy rolling again. The circumstance was immediately reported to the senior officer present; and he, of course, reported it upward to higher authority, but I am not aware that any serious notice was taken of the matter: for all that, it may have been one of the means that led to an awful catastrophe a few hours later.

About two hours after being relieved "off picket," I was sent with a detachment to throw up a breast-work along the crest of the ridge, fronting the Tchernaiia. Somewhat to our surprise we were set to work upon the top of a crag, which a Swiss chamois hunter would hardly care to climb. Some of us thought our labour might have been more advantageously applied elsewhere, but it was our duty to execute, not to question the behests of the Engineer in charge; so we dug away zealously. After nearly two hours had been spent in fortifying what nature had made impregnable, a superior officer, R. E., came round to inspect the work. This able soldier at once perceived the error which had been committed—through a too literal interpretation of orders, most like—therefore, after a little animated conversation with his subordinate, he despatched our picks and spades to an adjacent slope, which, if left unattended to, might, peradventure, prove tempting to Light Infantry.

I cannot but think that, at the commencement of the siege, "working parties" were neither methodized nor economized to the utmost extent. It is probable that, had labour been under intelligent and vigorous regulations, much that was left undone, might have been done, the safety of the army might have been more adequately provided for, the health of the troops might have been less perniciously affected.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## INKERMANN.

Russian reinforcements—Arrival of the Arch-Dukes, and General Dannenberg—Warning disregarded—What's that noise?—Deserters—Picquet captured—Russian advance—Picquets fall back—British aroused—Second and Light Divisions “fall in”—Guards turned out—Adams's fight—At 'em, Grenadiers—The “Brigade” in array—Scene of action—How the Minié worked—Early losses—Nature of the battle—Swords and pistols—Help from the “Line”—Gallantry of Russian Officers—Pakenham down!—Fall of Sir George Cathcart—Too hot in chase—Between two fires—The biter bit—Ammunition found—Saved!—Greeting on the field—The rush—Zouave fury—Carnage—Seeking one's own.—The French 50th—Private property cared for *in extremis*—Re-joining—Missing friends—Horrible spectacle—Sir De Lacy Evans—Russian cannon—Our guns taken, and re-taken—Situation of the French—18-pounders ordered up—Colonel Dickson, R.A.—Retreat—Losses—Before and after, of the Guards—Russian loss—Remarks—Russian plan of attack—Was Canrobert right or wrong?

To describe an ordinary battle with anything like clearness, is no easy task; but to paint a satisfactory picture of that extraordinary fight of Inkermann—that pell-mell curiosity of war—would be labour which the brain of a



Napier alone might compass. I shall, therefore, not attempt a general narrative of the events which have made November 5, 1854, immortal. I shall venture to touch little except what passed—dimly enough sometimes—before my own eyes.

On the 4th of November, it was known on the plateau that the enemy had received strong reinforcements. Liprandi's corps on the Tchernaiia had evidently been augmented. Large bodies of troops could be seen clustering on the northern heights of Inkermann. Several squadrons of cavalry had arrived in northern Sevastopol on the 3rd inst., amid portentous demonstrations of interest and respect. No wonder. Escorted by those cavaliers, came the Grand-Dukes Michael and Nicholas, and General Dannenberg, the renowned chief of the 4th Army-Corps.

On our side, these swelling indications of forthcoming mischief would not appear to have excited apprehension at Head-Quarters. The lesson read to us on the 26th of October had left only a faint impress on official memories. The right flank of the allied positions remained unguarded, except by a few hundred bayonets of the 2nd Division, now temporarily deprived of its able commander, Evans. The forewarned are not always fore-armed.

The night of the 4th was miserably cold; sleety rain fell incessantly, so the soldiers, who chanced to be "off duty," huddled together as close as possible in their tents, and pitied their comrades compelled to face such bitter weather on picquet, or in the trench. Hours wore away. In the front all was still. A steady drizzle sputtered on the canvas, and the camp slept—no thought of the morrow. For unthinking thousands only a little more sleep: a terrific "Arouse ye?" and then—ETERNITY.

About 2 o'clock, a.m., on the 5th, the foremost sentries of the out-lying pickets reported that they heard noises, as if of wheels, in the valley of Inkermann. Little heed,

however, was, at the time, paid to this information, it being supposed that the rumbling proceeded from peaceable carts or *arabas* on their way to the town. A little later, and the sentinels had again something to tell—the church bells of Sevastopol were tolling, and faint sounds of distant chaunting arose in the thick air. There was no reason, however, why these facts should be especially noteworthy. “It was Sunday morning, and the Russians were singing matins according to their wont on highdays and holydays. There’s nothing in it,” men argued.

“All well,” and 6½ a.m. A glimmer of pale light was struggling through the mizzling fog, the drenched duty-men were sighing for their reliefs, when half-a-dozen Russians gave themselves up as deserters to the post outlying in the ravine near Shell-hill. The English gathered gapingly round these fellows. The officer congratulated himself that he was about to march home with a prize. Hark ! a splashing tramp in the mud close by ; a huge, undefined blot breaking through the mist ; and, in a moment, a Russian battalion has pounced upon the incautious picquet. The officer and most of his detachment are prisoners ; the two or three men that contrive to escape, run in upon the next post, and shout the alarm “Rooshians ! Rooshians !” The surrender of the pretended deserters was a ruse to distract the eyes and ears of our people from the advancing brigades.

The enemy’s van pressed on. In its rear followed column after column, wave succeeding wave. The pickets unable to hold Shell-hill, and the slopes, against the flood, retired, fighting earnestly, under Colonel Haly, 47th Regiment, who received fourteen bayonet stabs in the combat—proof of the tenacity with which the skirmishers of the old 2nd Division clung to the foe. No sooner was Shell-hill bare, than the batteries, which had been so cleverly collected at its base, during the night, were dragged to the

summit, and the heavier metal laid in position. At this time, Sevastopol opened fire from all her forts upon the Allied works, and Prince Gortschakoff, who on this occasion commanded Liprandi's corps, began to be restless on the line of the Tchernaiia. Hence, Bosquet turned out, and stood on the *qui vive*.

Meanwhile, the British camp had been alarmed. The soldiers—

“—— Sleeping found by those they dread,  
Rouse and bestir themselves, 'ere well awake,”

And, pouring out of their tents into the fog, “fall in” as quickly as the bewildering twilight will permit.\* The 2nd and Light Divisions, with their field-batteries, being the troops nearest to the points assailed, have the honour of being the first to come to handy blows. The ever active Sir George Brown, at the head of the Lights, “doubles” to the left, where the slopes shelve down toward the city. Pennefather draws up what he can collect of the 2nd Division across the road, directly in front of his camp, detaching a few companies of the 41st and 49th, with a gun or two, under the brave Adams, to the far right, to man the unarmed sand-bag battery, constructed by Sir De Lacy Evans on the ridge overhanging the Inkermann ruins. The 4th Division is marching up to the support of Brown and Pennefather. The 3rd Division prepares to repel any sortie that might break upon the siege-works. Thus, at the outset of the conflict,

\* The following order of the day, issued by Sir Colin Campbell, before Lucknow, March, 1858, might have appeared in the Crimean Order-book, with advantage to the army—“Staff-officers, when warning regiments to turn out, will invariably seek the commanding officer of the corps or the senior officer in camp; but they are not to rush wildly about, vociferating to regiments to turn out, and thereby causing panic.”

the rim of the allied right flank was held against immense odds by four incomplete brigades. It was while these surpassing troops were in the act of getting under arms, that the 32-pounder howitzers and 24-pounder guns, in position on Shell-hill, commenced discharging "their devilish glut." Never, surely, did soldiers make ready to fight, and to die, under more tremendous circumstances. Upon the plateau hung a fog, an impalpable wet blanket, so thick that it was next to an impossibility to make out an object twenty yards off; on all sides, too, the roar of deep-throated ordnance; and, beating full against the files as they mustered, ripping and crunching battalions 'ere well formed, an iron maelstrom. What a blessing we had veterans in our ranks in this extremity, otherwise, it had been a rueful day for England. The men fall quick, but there's no shrinking; a few minutes, and the thin British line is hotly engaged. The Division Brown has forced back a heavy column at the bayonet's point. Pennefather, although with fast diminishing numbers, holds his ground with the fang of an English mastiff. Adams shoves back battalion after battalion, as they come swarming up, through the brushwood, on the sand-bag battery.

"——— Dire was the noise  
Of conflict; overhead the dismal hiss  
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,  
And flying, vaulted either host with fire."

We now turn to another part of the field. The camps of the Divisions, we left so furiously contending, were considerably nearer the Inkermann valley than was the Guards' camp; hence the Household Brigade came later into action.

On the morning in question, the tent of which I owned a sixth part was occupied by only two officers beside myself, the rest of its tenants being on picquet in Canrob



redoubt. All at once, we three were aroused by the bellowing of artillery ; we thought nothing of it—"It's only a little fire in the front." With a yawn and a stretch we again disposed ourselves to sleep ; but, just as our eye-lids dropped, the twittering of Miniés fell upon the ear—"Hang it, the sentries at their old game, blazing at Will 'o the Wisp." Sleep no more ; every moment the cannon spoke louder and louder—every moment the rifles cracked sharper and sharper. There could be no mistake as to something being in the wind, so we arose, and commenced to pull on boots and begird ourselves with swords and revolvers, in order to be prepared for a "fall in ;" nor did the summons tarry. As cloak and hairy cap were huddled on, cries, hoarse and hurried, electrified the camp, "STAND TO YOUR ARMS ! STAND TO YOUR ARMS !" Immediately, we tumbled into a muggy mist, very faintly tinged with day.

With admirable alacrity the men formed on their covering sergeants. Two or three minutes sufficed to tell off files. The adjutant mounted his gallant grey ; the officers stood at the head of their companies—now the word of command, "Left four deep, quick march," and the portion of the Coldstream Guards, which the morning found in their tents, strode away in the direction whence came the noisiest outcry of battle. The Grenadiers and Fusiliers, being camped somewhat nearer than the Coldstreams to the flank attacked, were before-hand with them, by a few minutes.

As we neared the battle, its terrible character was unfolded. Not that much could be seen ; but if eyes were all but useless, there were other and most trustworthy witnesses—hearing and feeling. A hail of shot and shell swept the scrubby ground over which we hurried ; while yet far from the foeman's face, my company (which was leading) lost an excellent sergeant, a corporal, and a private, by a shell bursting amid the ranks.



As this handful of brave soldiers—only 17 officers, 34 sergeants, 14 drummers, and 373 rank and file of the Coldstream, had any regimental concern in this day's glory—gained upon the sand-bag battery, the turbid air seemed to be swarming, alive with buzzing insects innumerable. No other description, that I know of, can convey an idea of the perpetual, here, there, everywhere "ping" and hum of the musketry. And now, the heroic Dawson, who commanded the little *Nulli Secundus* battalion, formed it up in line on the right of the Grenadiers and Fusileers. Thus, a black thread of about 1,300 Guardsmen was drawn across the assailed ridge. Such was the seemingly insignificant barrier, against which the hardened soldiery of Russia dashed without avail.

Let us look back for a moment. It has been said that Adams, with certain men of the 41st and 49th, had, on the first alarm, been sent to occupy the important point topped by the sand-bag work. These troops reached their post not a minute too soon; for, nearly simultaneous with their arrival, a body of Russian Infantry mounted the height. This corps, breathless with the ascent, was pushed back by the "Fiery Forties" with ease; but, without delay, other columns took the place of the beaten one, and Adams had toughest business on his hands; sometimes he pitched the foemen clean out of the work—sometimes his little band was forced rearward by dint of overpowering numbers; however, he fought on, and despite their stolid perseverance, the enemy could obtain no permanent hold. But human strength and endurance have limits. The struggle was too unequal to last. After a series of noble efforts, Adams was swept out of the battery by main force. He was compelled to retire. He did so in good order. What a conjuncture! Had more English not come up at this moment, the key of the position would have been clutched by Pauloff. The Russian

pioneers would have set to work, a lodgment would have been effected, guns laid, and woe to the allies.

But fresh soldiers are at hand, and such soldiers—the veterans of the British Guard. With ringing cheers 450 Grenadiers come bounding on; bayonets charged, they dash at the battery, now full of Muscovites. The blow is irresistible. In a horrid minute the little enclosure is black with corpses, and throbbing with wounded. The Grenadiers now split into three divisions: one party occupied the battery; the other two formed at right angles on both flanks thereof. The Fusiliers, on arriving, prolonged their comrades' line to the left; the Coldstreams, as soon as they came up, lengthened it on the right. Thus, the narrow strip of height, on the beak of which arose the two-gun work, was thinly edged by the *tria juncta in uno* ranged two deep. The Duke of Cambridge and General Bentinck had the command.

No sooner were we in line than an unlooked-for, a perilous difficulty showed itself. Many of the Miniés, at least in my neighbourhood, missed fire. The failure is easily accounted for. Throughout the rainy night, the loaded rifles had, according to custom, been piled outside the tents; consequently, locks, stocks, and barrels were very wet. However, so excellent was the workmanship of the arm, that after the fruitless expenditure of several caps on each damp nipple—one soldier told me he had used sixteen caps before he discharged his piece—we were cheered with bangs, denoting “all right.”

I have alluded, more than once, to the little leathern hoods which invariably enshield the nipples of Russian firelocks, and the greased rags with which the Turks so carefully bandage the locks of their weapons. The wisdom of these slighted contrivances was now brought home to us. May we profit by the experience.

The most astonishing battle of modern times had

begun—a battle which is, perhaps, without precedent, since the application of science to war;—a predicament in which matchless “private soldiership” was all in all. Consider the stage on which this passage of arms was fought out. The hill was immersed in vapour; a man could scarcely see the length of his own company; no man could tell with precision what was going on fifty paces on either side of him. The ground on which we stood was rough, and sprinkled with bushes. Below us, on the right, was the valley of the Tchernaiia, a very sea of mist. On the left, yawned a deep ravine, separating us from where the 2nd Division struggled. With their dismal “regulation” howls, the enemy surged up the slopes, front, right, and left. One column attacking the sand-bag battery—which being without a *banquette* or step, whereon the defenders might stand to fire over the parapet, was indefensible according to ordinary rules; but this outrageous, abnormal emergency admitted of no rules, so we regarded the miserable work as a very citadel, and clung to it, tooth and nail—other columns at the same time assailing both flanks. Owing to the thickness of the fog, the Russians could approach within thirty paces of us without being clearly perceived. This was no disadvantage to the English; for, at such close quarters, the Minié played with terrific effect on the serried masses, blasting them like flashes of lightning. No human nature, however disciplined and stubborn—the Muscovite military nature is both—could make head against that hellish musketry. After a minute or two of sharp firing, the columns would get troubled; waver a little; and then, to the right about, and retire; nevertheless, we were not left unmolested for an instant; no sooner had one corps made off, than its supporting battalion started up before our view, with the same dull stereotyped yells, the same obstinate but soulless action. Although, in consequence of their massy formation, and the admirable weapon with

which they were smitten, the enemy suffered comparatively far more, than our own dispersed line ; yet, at a very early hour of the morning the British losses were heavy. Scarcely had we well fallen to, before I saw the Coldstream Adjutant, Elliot, than whom no man was ever more deservedly beloved, stretched dead, and the favorite "grey"—poor little Bashi-bazouk—standing bleeding by his master's side. As my company took ground to a flank, the colour-sergeant was felled with a bullet through the side. Never can I forget the look that dying man cast upward at me as I passed on : it was horrible in its intensity. Every moment, on every side, comrades were dashed down.

As time wore on, and the ranks lessened, nearly every semblance of order on the battalion scale vanished. All the officers and non-commissioned officers—the gallantry and intelligence with which the latter did their duty could not be surpassed—had now power to do, was to keep the soldiers of their respective companies partially together. Tactics, of course, there were none. The exigency outstripped art ; brute valour and moral constancy were the sole arguments applicable to the situation. Front, right and left, every Englishman saw, or felt a foe. This foe must be kept at arm's length, or all was lost, and, under the remarkable circumstances of the case, he could only be withstood by individual exertion, by an exhibition almost superhuman of Anglo-Saxon "pluck," and by the shattering bullet of the Minié. Therefore, wherever danger was, British soldiers stood, clustered in sparse knots, fighting each on his own hook—so many lions at bay. Some people talk of the English private "requiring to be led by the officer,"—a mistake. On that blood-puddled ridge there was neither leading, nor being led. Every heart, no matter whether noble or peasant, answered to the call of duty as became a man ; every arm struck as became a man ; every Grenadier, Coldstreamer,



Fusileer, Linesman died, as it is meet a Briton should die, for his country. In place of being under the necessity of cheering on his men, the wary officer had rather to curb their impetuosity, to keep them from being carried by heroic fury too far after the retiring enemy. Of this truth, I had signal proof later in the day.

One might as well attempt to describe the manœuvres of a faction fight in Tipperary, as to narrate the details of this death-struggle. All to be said is, that amid a dense fog raged wholesale murder; the mortal strife was hand to hand, foot to foot, muzzle to muzzle, butt-end to butt-end. It must not be supposed that we always stood rooted on our ground, that we never budged. No, the fight rested not steadfast for an instant. It was now backward, now forward, now sideways. Here, a Grenadier party, after a frantic tussle, would be forced by overwhelming swarms out of the battery; there, a knot of Coldstreamers would arrest the advance of an entire Russian battalion; in another place, a cluster of Fusileers, rallying after a repulse, would fling themselves upon a column, and, with the sheer might of strong hearts, arms, and steel, send it slap-dash over the height's crest. This ceaseless wrestling to and fro accounts for the sand bag battery being occupied alternately by men of the different Guard regiments (or, more properly speaking, by mixed parties of the three regiments, larded with brave "liners"). This was the *modus operandi*. Whenever Pauloff succeeded in ousting one band of defenders from the work, a comrade batch—the nearest at hand—would rush in, and by a combination of bullet, bayonet, and gun stock, thrust forth the intruders.

As these isolated engagements took effect beard to beard, officers had occasionally opportunities of testing the sort of stuff out of which their swords had been forged. Wilkinson's cutlery stood the trial well—not so the handiwork of less careful armourers. At any rate, I



can assert that my recreant blade, which had been bought of the tailor who rigged me out on appointment, bent like a thing of pewter over the thick skull of an unpleasantly forward Calmuck. To all expectant ensigns of my acquaintance do I exhibit this goose-begotten tuck, with the hope that its disloyal curve may be unto them warning against an inconsiderate and all-in-the-lump purchase of their equipments. The "Colts," which were either decently capped, or had escaped the malign influence of the wet night, did their owners faithful service; but such pistols as had suffered from damp, or were furnished with miserable American caps, bought at Constantinople, could not be depended on. Out of my five barrels I could only persuade one to do its duty; from that one, however, went a lucky, but not mortal ball.

Time marches so marvellously fast in battle—hours fly like minutes—that it is utterly impossible for men plunged in the *melée*, to form an idea of how they stand with the clock. I have, therefore, no notion at what period reinforcements reached us. All I know is, that, toward the close of the fight, I saw many linesmen fighting intermixed with guardsmen. One one occasion, being hard pressed on a flank, I ran to another band of our fellows to obtain help. Among those I appealed to, was a soldier of the 20th regiment; to my shout, "Fall in there my good fellow," the honest man, under the impression that he was being ordered away altogether, replied—"O yer honor, don't be after sinding me off, I'd like to go on fightin wid the guards." When it was explained that he was simply asked to lend a hand and rifle to some guardsmen who were in jeopardy hard by, the gallant Patlander said not another word, but sprang into the desired position, and fell fighting like Leonidas.

No hull in the battle-storm. Despite melting ranks—despite the fresh regiments which continued to stream up

the hill side, despite the growing scarcity of ammunition, the English clung to their battery with the grip of despair. If, by chance, the bull dog's hold was for an instant shaken off, the next moment his teeth closed tighter than ever on the sand bags.

So immense was the importance of the little tongue of land on which we stood at bay—among other advantages, the mastery of it, would have enabled the Russians to operate with withering effect on the right flank of the second division, which could only just withstand the weight of the front attack—that Pauloff made mighty exertions to gain a footing. The fewer the bear-skins visible, the greater the number of flat caps that thronged up. The Guards, occupying the redoubt, by standing on the carcasses of the slain, were enabled to fire over the parapet at the enemy fermenting underneath; or, as cartridges grew scarce, to smash out their brains with musket butts, and to heave big stones down upon them.

The Russian officers behaved like true soldiers. They were ever in front of their less adventurous rank and file, urging them on with voice, and uplifted sword; nay, they rushed freely on certain death, with the view of inflaming the sluggish spirit of their followers. I saw one glorious fellow leap with an hurrah from the parapet of the battery into the midst of a *chevaux de frise* of bayonets. A private soldier followed; while one would wink, the two were dead, pierced to the back-bone in twenty places.

And now, half the brigade—a grandiose title for 1,300 men—strewn the ground; some slain outright, others bleeding to death, others vainly imploring to be carried off the field. Oh! that I must write “vainly,” but in the devilish turmoil not a man, whom God had shielded, could be spared to carry away the wounded. The honour of England, nay, the very safety of the army demanded that all living should be breast to breast with the Rus-

sian. At one moment I caught sight of three officers of my acquaintance, stretched side-by-side almost. Two, Butler and Nevile, had done for ever with human misery ; the third, Pakenham, of the Grenadiers, lived still ; I heard him faintly beg for a stretcher, heard him murmur how he had been basely stabbed after his fall. I looked about for the drummers, whose duty it was to succour the wounded, but a sudden press carried me nearly off my legs, and I saw that brave soldier no more.

It is known, that the 4th Division (Cathcart) on approaching the battle, was split into two independent bodies. The 1st brigade (Goldie) marched to the left of the Inkermann road, to the support of the 2nd Division. The 2nd brigade (Torrens), led by the gallant Cathcart in person, proceeded to the extreme right, for the purpose of strengthening the Guards. It would appear that, when Sir George reached the rear of the imperilled "Brigade," he found them struggling to regain the battery, out of which they had been lately driven. Now, the morning was still so thick, the confusion so confounded, that a new comer was not at all likely to form a correct idea of the real complexion of matters. Perhaps Cathcart underestimated the force with which the enemy acted ; perhaps he thought (as many would have thought under the circumstances) a stroke at the Russian left or rear to be the most judicious assistance he could render his over-taxed countrymen. Be that as it may, at the head of two or three companies of the 68th, and some 200 men of the 20th and 46th, he plunged into a hollow, a little to the right of the battery. The result is notorious. Hardly had the devoted troops quitted the hill-top, than they found themselves enveloped, hemmed in, pinned down by deep columns. There was no retreating. For a while, the soldiers fought with the rage of desperation, and then—destruction. The general and his *alter ego*,



Seymour, fell dead, hit with many bullets ; Torrens and Maitland (aide-de-camp) were badly wounded, and the few soldiers, not shot down, were scattered hither and thither, in hopeless flight.

Meanwhile, the Guards—who, in the rush and trampling, and skull-cracking of the strife, had been ignorant of Cathcart's ill-fated diversion in their favour—seemed at their last gasp, every minute found them less able—not a jot less willing—to repel the enemy. Hardly a man had tasted food that morning, hence, individual strength began to flag ; where companies had contended, now only sub-divisions struggled, hence, collective power was ebbing fast. Nor was this all, ammunition had become frightfully scarce ; in many cases, indeed, the soldiers had none left, so they were reduced to rifling the pouches of their fallen messmates ; and, when that resource failed, to pounding away at the ugly Calmuck visages with stocks and stones.

I have said that the men needed no pricking on, "no inspiring example,"—on the contrary, that the officer had more frequently to draw the rein than to ply the spur. Of this truth, a remarkable illustration was now afforded me. The group, with which I was connected, had forced a superior number of Russians into hurried flight down the hill's-side into the valley. With this good fortune the brave fellows ought to have been content. Not so, however. Immediately the "Muscov" showed their heels, I saw several soldiers break away from the right of my party, and pursue the fugitives. It was plain that, unless the hunters were quickly halted, they hasted to destruction. Therefore, shouting "halt ! halt !" I ran after them. As well might a penny trumpet strive to make its puny pipe heard amidst the crash of Costa's orchestra, as my small voice in that mortal uproar. Down the steep we went : the dogs of war hot upon the trail, I calling

them off with impotent vehemence. We reached the valley in disorder. Scarcely had our feet touched the plain, before some of Liprandi's riflemen sprang up from amongst the bushes, and blazed full in our faces. A few men dropped. At this moment, several soldiers of the 46th and 68th—remnants of Torrens's crushed brigade—joined us: we all turned about, and began to re-ascend the hill. The rise was precipitous, the ground slippery; distant field-pieces let fly grape at us, without, however, doing much hurt; *tirailleurs* kept peppering our backs; not a round left in our pouches. Every minute guardsmen or "liners" rolled over, some struck with lead, others done for through sheer exhaustion. It was a dire emergency—press on, or die. We had got about half-way up the height, and were beginning to think ourselves safe; and yet the worst was to come. On a sudden, a shower of bullets from the hill's crest, right above our heads, amazed us; the soldiers around me cried out, "Why, our own chaps are firing on us; we be mistaken for Rooshians." Looking upward, I beheld, through the vapour which still hung upon the plateau, a black line of infantry, which I also took for countrymen; and so, with one accord, we roared, "Hold hard, for God's sake; we are English!" The louder we shouted, the heavier rained the balls about our ears. Dismal predicament: a set of panting wretches clambering up a mountain, between two fires! We still toiled upward, and now it became plain that the troops shooting at us from above, were Russian, that by some mishap had gotten possession of our old position on the ridge. As soon as I ascertained the fact, I formed my *omnium gatherum* into single file with an interval of several paces between each man, and desired the soldiers, instead of advancing straight to the front, to turn sharp to the left, and proceed along the hill's side, inclining gradually towards the summit—



my object was, to gain the rear of the enemy, our only chance of avoiding cold steel or bonds. As we ran in this string for our very lives, a man fell wounded near me ; the thump of his fall made me turn round ; as I did so, two Russians started up from behind a bush, and, with bayonets fixed, dashed at the poor shuddering fellow, but the grenadier, nearest him, had marked their damnable intent and, before a word could be said, I heard the muzzle of a musket ring upon the breast-bone of one ruffian, I saw a gory point protruding between his twitching shoulder-blades. With a last effort, the transfixed raised his firelock to strike at his assailant, and, in that attitude, tumbled heels over head down the steep place ; the second miscreant escaped.

I have said we lacked ammunition. We now actually stumbled upon enough and to spare. Stretched right across our path was a dead ammunition mule, evidently killed by a shell, as also had been the Turkish driver, whose corpse lay close by. Heaven be praised, the panniers were untouched ! I shall not attempt to describe the ravenous avidity with which the few men that remained to me seized upon the Godsend. In an instant, the panniers were broken open, and pouches, pockets, caps crammed with cartridges. March ! By this time, we were some little distance to the rear of where the Russians stood, when they commenced firing upon us, and were close to the brow of the height. The crisis, therefore, was at hand. Should we escape, or should we be knocked on the head ? The odds, I own, seemed rather in favour of the grim alternative. For all that, we put our trust in Providence and kept going. At length, my little band—it had dwindled to next to nothing—topped the ridge. The fog has passed away, there is broad day-light now. But where are the English ? Gone ; and in their stead large bodies of the enemy. A bad look out. We're in for it !

Hark, the *pas de charge!* the roll of fifty drums ! the bray of fifty clarions ! We're saved ! We're saved ! See, clouds of Zouaves and Algériens ! Bosquet's Light Infantry ! As they come bounding towards us, we flourish our muskets with rapture in the air. We cry "Thank God !" We cheer—how we cheer—" *Wive francis*" (such was the unscholarly pronounciation of the benediction). The French reply with equal heart, " *Vivent les Anglais ! Les Anglais sont les plus braves soldats du monde !* and, on every side, hot Zouave hands are stretched forth to clasp ours. We mix with the glorious ranks, and now the grand, the ecstatic moment of a life — VICTORY ! TRIUMPH ! The warrior whirlwind sweeps on ; the Zouaves, with flashing eyes and deep-mouthed oaths—a tiger herd ; the "Turcos" hoarsely screaming and wildly brandishing their rifles. The officers point with their swords to the ever-memorable battery ahead—our goal for the last time—shouting " *En avant mes braves !* We are received with a scathing fire from behind the sand-bags ; it lashes the fury of the *Zu-zus*. By the gorge the torrent floods into the work. The panic-struck Russians are shot, stabbed, bludgeoned, trod under foot by scores, in the endeavour to escape. The place is as a slaughterhouse—blood and groans, and shrieks for mercy ; but there is no mercy. At times like this, man is no Christian, but a ruthless savage.

The Zouaves clamber over the parapets of the work, and on after the flying enemy ! My God, a hideous sight ! The little space in front of the battery (*i.e.* toward Inkermann) is literally heaped with dead and wounded, so thickly heaped, that nowhere could we get clear footing ; our path lay wholly over stiffening carcasses, or fainting wounded.

In this fiery onset, the French, at least the covering party, suffered greatly ; some idea of their losses may be

inferred from the fact that nearly every Englishman, who fought in their front, was hit.

Bosquet's attack being obviously successful, and my right-hand man, the last of my party, as I believe, and one of the best and bravest of soldiers, (as more than one Frenchman remarked to me, on the field) having fallen, badly wounded, I considered it my duty to rejoin my own regiment, where such humble aid as I could offer would at all events be in the right place. A French *chef de bataillon*, to whom I addressed myself for information as to the whereabouts of the Guards, told me he believed *ces beaux soldats* had taken post somewhere to the left. In that direction, then, I sought my battalion. I will not stop to narrate all I saw on my way. I will not attempt to paint the furious cannonade that tore and rooted up the earth on all sides; now and again blowing to atoms, or pounding into shapeless masses of flesh the groups of wounded men, who, for the sake of companionship or shelter, had herded together under boulders and bushes.

Still no sign of the fighting English, or indeed of aught alive and well. Presently, however, a French battalion approached—the 50th of the Line. I fell into the ranks, and we advanced. At every pace, entire files were “mowed o’erthwart,” for the fire was very hot; nevertheless, this brave regiment marched on rapidly and in steady order. I noted in rear a goodly array of surgeons, hospital-orderlies, and *cacolets* (mule-litters), even the *cantinière* was at her post. A grey-bearded *Sapeur* had charge of the pale but resolute woman, leading her quite tenderly by the hand. An opportunity was also given me of remarking the care which the mounted officers of our allies take of their private property in the white heat of battle. As the Colonel was shouting the command—



*Flanquez à gauche*—(take ground to the left) a round shot smote his horse just as the word *flanquez* was uttered. Over and over rolled man and brute, but in a jiffy *M. le Commandant* was on his legs, crying with a firm, ringing, voice—*à gauche*. Next moment, a pioneer was set to strip the dying charger of his trappings.

After a little while with the 50th, I caught sight of some English officers at a short distance to the left; of course I made for them, and soon found myself in presence of General Pennefather, who told me the Guards were on the march from the right flank, and might speedily be expected on this very spot. Before many minutes had elapsed, all remaining of the heroic 1,300 that had fought in and about the Sand-bag battery arrived. O, it was heart-rending to search in vain through those wasted ranks for one familiar form after another, to ask for tidings of friends, by whose side one had slept, watched, and faced the enemy, and to get in reply a mournful shake of the head, a shrug of the shoulders. Alas, for the fortune of war!

We were now made to lie down under the edge of the plateau, directly in front of where the Second Division camp had stood only a few hours before. Ahead, our artillery was blazing away, and getting infernally blazed at in return. Although our present position was not an enviable one—shot, shell, case-shot, and grape flew about like hail, too often cutting down good fellows, for whom bayonet and bullet had had mercy previously—yet did it afford us a little rest, which we sorely needed.

It would require the imagination of Dante or Milton to conceive the havoc and spoil and ruin that blistered our eyeballs as we gazed around. Not a tent upright. The torn, bloodied canvas of the camp spread, like a carpet on which murders had been done, over half an acre! Here,

ghastly wretches murmured "water." There, wounded horses lay—

" And with wild rage,  
Jerked out their armed hoofs at their dead masters,  
Killing them twice."

Hellish picture. Look where you will, your shrinking glance falls only upon carnage and demolition. You have before you an abattoir, and an earthquake, blended, —bruised, gashed, disembowelled man-flesh and horse-flesh commingled with broken instruments of war; officers and soldiers dead, expiring, and in torment; fragments of artillery-tumbrils, ambulance waggons, with roofs shot away and wheels wrenched off; shattered muskets, heavy round shot all thrown together in horrible confusion. Continually fresh victims fell, for the space intervening between the hill brow, under which we nestled, and the Windmill was still "trenched and channelled" by the enemy's cannonade.

I marked Sir De Lacy Evans conversing with General Pennefather in the very teeth of this fire. Pale and worn the General looked, yet his face was calm, his manner composed as ever. One read in the serene intelligence of his eye, in the steadiness of his voice, that war and Sir De Lacy Evans were old acquaintances. The first light of that morning found the Second Division Chief sick on ship-board, in Balaclava Harbour, but no sooner did news of battle—of battle which he had foreseen, ay, pronounced inevitable—reach him, than he arose, feeble as he was, mounted his horse, rode to the front, and was now giving the benefit of his experience to his daring lieutenant.

Let us return to the time when, in order to touch upon the doings of the Guards, we left the Second and Light Divisions grappling with "the children of the mist." It will be remembered how Sir George Brown, with the first note of alarm, sent the 1st brigade, Light Division, to the



uttermost left, that they might hold the slopes adjacent to the town, and cover the English "right attack" (battery). The 2nd brigade of the same division took post more to the right, thus giving the hand to the Second Division, which maintained the centre, *i.e.*, the ground of their own camp. The Fourth Division, on nearing the scene of action, was divided: its 1st brigade, under the lamented Goldie, backing up Pennefather on the left of the Simpheropol Road—the 2nd brigade, as we know, "doubling" to the relief of the Guards, fighting on the extreme right of the battle. The Third Division (England) could only afford two regiments to the aid of Brown, the rest being employed in or near the trenches, under the orders of the vigorous Eyre. It must not be supposed that these positions were taken up scientifically, or according to deliberately issued orders. No; they were taken up at random, as troops arrived to fill them. The enemy was here, there, everywhere; consequently, as regiments—in the greater number of instances mere detachments, just relieved out of the trenches—hurried up, they laid on, wherever their arms appeared to be in greatest request at the moment. In short, they threw themselves into the first gap that showed itself. The artillery got into position with all speed; but it was soon manifest that, notwithstanding the skill and courage of our gunners, their 9-pounders and 24-pounder howitzers could not cope advantageously with the superior number and larger calibre of the Russian metal, *viz.*, 24-pounders and 32-pounder howitzers, in position, and field-batteries, consisting of more 12-pounders than 9-pounders. Crimean experience should rid us of all conceit in showy field-day galloping about with pop-guns. To obtain practical results, we must take ugly, heavy metal into our service. Notwithstanding, the R.A., heedless of the immense losses they were sustaining in men and horses, fought on with

the same unswerving constancy as their comrades of the bayonet.

The struggle on this part of the field (left and centre) was of a piece with the struggle of the Foot Guards on the right. Here as there, disjointed bodies of British held their own against the deep masses surging upward through vapour-loaded brushwood, under cover of the fire from Shell-hill. The battle ebbed and flowed, swung backward and forward; sometimes "Muscov" forced John Bull back upon his very camping ground; sometimes John Bull shoved Muscov over the edge of the plateau with dreadful slaughter; nevertheless, fared Muscovite well or ill, no matter! Column after column poured onward. With stubborn persistence they sought our guns; and, in one instance, success was all but theirs. By means of a fierce push at the left, they seized four cannon, despite the noble stand of Major Townsend and his artillerymen, all, or nearly all, of whom perished by the bayonet, as they fought around their pieces. A transient flush! Hardly had hostile hands touched English iron, before our 77th and 88th were in the midst. A mortal second or so, and the guns were our own again; three of them we owed to the reckless valour of the Rangers, the fourth being recaptured by the scarcely less Irish 77th.

It may be asked, why did not the French render assistance? Because, for a long time our allies were in a situation of great perplexity and danger. On the left of their siege works they were hard pressed. Taking advantage of the mist which prevented the signals of the sentinels on the look out being perceived, a corps of about 5000 Russians rushed upon the batteries, opposed to the Flag-Staff bastion; for a while the *coup* prospered. Four mortars were spiked, our allies were thrown into some disorder; but they rallied quickly; and, after a hot conflict, drove their assailants whence they came, with heavy loss.

So eager was the chase, that the young General Lourmel—the Marceau of the French army in the Crimea—who led the Zouaves and Chasseurs de Vincennes, received his death wound under the very walls of Sevastopol. Yet more, it should be borne in mind that, during the greater part of the morning, it was impossible to ascertain which was the real attack, and which the feint. The plateau is of wide extent. It was shrouded in fog. The roar of cannon, the rattle of small arms were heard in all directions; as far as could be made out, the enemy were advancing from the N. E. and W. For example, Liprandi's army-corps (under Gortchakoff) stood *en bataille*, in the valley of the Tchernaiia. For a time, the plan of its General was unfathomable. Would Balaclava be attacked? Was the rear of the allied position to be stormed? Now, so long as doubt existed as to the particular point against which the Russian force in this quarter would be driven, it was obviously out of the power of Bosquet (especially responsible for the safety of the Anglo-French rear) to detach elsewhere any considerable body of his troops. Nevertheless, at the very outset he did tender to the English such aid as he could spare; but, under a misconception of the nature of the fight, then commencing on the right, that aid was unfortunately declined. In fact, it was not till time had stripped Gortchakoff of his false colours, had unmistakeably shown that the horse, foot, and guns marshalled on the banks of the Tchernaiia, with all their big looks, meant nothing serious, that the French *corps d'observation* could possibly move to the succour of the English.

About eleven o'clock things looked desperate. Our Artillery was overmatched, our Infantry broken into fragments. A vast number of officers had gone down. Unless speedy help came, all was lost. Suddenly the tide turned; the sun pierced through the fog. The omen was a happy one.



With the hope of resisting, on something like fair terms, the enemy's crushing fire, Lord Raglan ordered two 18-pounders (the heaviest metal we possessed outside the siege-works) up to the front. Colonel Gambier was severely wounded while exerting himself to get these pieces dragged to the edge of the heights—a difficult task, owing to the losses we had sustained in horses, and the miry, cut-up condition of the ground—whereupon, the command of the guns devolved on Colonel Collingwood Dickson, one of the ablest young officers in the army, who by his vigour and skill in this crisis, largely contributed to the coming victory.

And now, Bosquet having seen through the swagger of Gortchakoff, was free to befriend the British. He changed front. With the Zouaves and Indigènes he struck a terrible blow at the sand-bag battery; while his troops of the line and field guns advanced to the support of the exhausted but inflexible regiments, holding the left and centre. Here was the turning point of the battle. With reinforcements came recoil. Although the Muscovites were over and over again rallied, and brought to the scratch by their brave officers, they no longer made head, nay, they lost ground every minute. Before long, it was plain that they were falling back at all points.

However, those ninety cannon still thundered on; the English and French field-pieces still fought them without success; but when Dickson, after surmounting difficulties, which would have appeared insuperable to a man of inferior talent, and less determination, had gotten his 18-pounders to bear upon the artillery in position on Shell-hill, a change came over the state of things in that quarter. The opening discharge of the eighteens must have  
home, for almost immediately after it,  
grew unsteady; a few more round  
midst of guns, gunners, and horses

limbering up, retired behind the crest of the hill. Not yet were they beaten. More than once they re-appeared to dare our shot; more than once they had to hide from its blasting accuracy. Indeed, so dogged was their purpose, that it was past four p.m., when their last battery rumbled away for good and all, leaving the plot of ground to which the 18-pounders had applied their force, marked with one hundred corpses, more than fifty dead horses, and a score of upset tumbrils.

The retreat was now general. The more distant Russian brigades withdrew in good order; not so those nearest the Allies. So long as they were sheltered by the fire of their artillery, the assaulting battalions did stoutly—they rallied several times—but, when the might of that tremendous arm began to fail, they lost heart; they turned to the right about, and the English and French drove them at the bayonet's point down the slopes into the valley. There, all was wild confusion. The narrow *chaussée* crossing the marsh was alive with a vast rushing mob, which some of our field-guns kept racking with plunging shot. Horrible must have been the butchery. Entire sections must have been scranched.

By half-past four p.m. the soldier's battle was won. Of the 8,000 Englishmen that fought on this immortal day, 43 officers, 32 sergeants, 4 drummers, 380 rank and file were killed; 101 officers, 121 sergeants, 17 drummers, 1,694 rank and file were wounded; 1 officer, 6 sergeants, 191 rank and file were missing. Total loss, 2,590.

Numbered with the dead were Generals Cathcart, Strangways (of Leipsic renown), and Goldie. Reported as wounded were Generals Brown, Bentinck, Adams, and Torrens.

I subjoin a few figures, which tell, with eloquent simplicity, the Alpha and Omega of the Guards: how "the Brigade" stood when battle joined, and how it answered



the roll at half-past four o'clock p.m. In the first place, there went forth on that morning,—

	Offrs.	Sergts.	Drums.	R & F	Total.
Grenadier Guards	... 22	... 24	... 17	... 438	... 501
Coldstream Guards	... 17	... 34	... 14	... 373	... 438
Scots Fusileer Guards	... 20	... 23	... 17	... 332	... 392
					1,331

Secondly, there fell, foot to foot with the Russians, of—

	Offrs.	Sergts.	Drums.	R & F.	Total.
Grenadier Guards, killed...	3	... 4	... 1	... 71	} 233
" " wounded	6	... 6	... 0	... 138	
" " missing	0	... 0	... 0	... 4	
	Offrs.	Sergts.	Drums.	R & F.	Total.
Coldstream Guards, killed	8	... 3	... 0	... 59	} 197
" " wounded	5	... 6	... 2	... 114	
" " missing	0	... 0	... 0	... 0	

N.B.—The 8th Company of this batt., out of 62 *r* and *f* present in the battle, lost 22 men killed, and 19 wounded. Total casualties, 41—two-thirds of the effective. The eight officers killed were Lt.-Colonels Dawson and Cowell, Captains Mackinnon, Bouverie, Elliott, and Ramsden; Lieuts. Greville and Disbrowe. The five wounded were Colonel G. Upton, Lt.-Colonels Lord C. Fitzroy and Halkett, Captain Fielding, and Lt. Amhurst. The *four* who escaped unhurt, were Captains Stronge and Wilson, Lieuts. Tower and Crawley.

	Offrs.	Sergts.	Drums.	R & F.	Total.
Scots Fus. Guards, killed...	1	... 2	... 0	... 47	} 173
" " " wounded	8	... 8	... 2	... 105	
" " " missing	0	... 0	... 0	... 0	
Grand total of loss in Brigade of Guards,—nearly half the officers and soldiers actually engaged.					612

The despatch, which informed England of this dearly bought victory, commended the services of many of the living, and blazoned the merits of many of the dead; but from that encomiastic scroll, there was, at least, one re-

markable omission. To the memory of Colonel the Hon. Vesey Dawson, shot through the heart while in command of the Coldstream Guards, was conceded not a passing word of eulogy, or of regret. It is melancholy to reflect that on this humble page should stand the only record of how as brave a soldier as ever drew a sword, as noble a gentleman as ever earned the love and respect of his fellow-men, fought and died.

The 6,000 French actually in line, lost about 1,760 men of all ranks; hence, the total casualties of the 14,000 Allies who worsted Menschikoff, Dannenberg, and two Arch-Dukes, on November 5, 1854, mounted up to 4,350.

Lord Raglan reckoned the number of Russians concentrated for the attack at not less than 60,000. Of these, he believed 5,000 were left dead on the ground, and 10,000 either wounded or made prisoners, which gives 15,000 as the sum total of the enemy's casualties. A Russian writer—in the main a fair one—disputes the correctness of this estimate. He calculates the number of his countrymen actually engaged, or ready to have engaged, at about 29,700, and will admit a loss of only 3,000 killed, and 6,000 wounded; total 9,000.\* With respect to

\* Captain Anitschkof, of the Russian Staff, states the Russian loss as follows:—

	Generals.	Officers.	Soldiers.	Total.
Slain ...	1 ...	42 ...	2,927 ...	2,970
Wounded	2 ...	206 ...	5,583 ...	5,791
	<hr/> 3	<hr/> 248	<hr/> 8,510	<hr/> 8,761

The same writer gives the following "detail" of the Russian forces on the 5th November, 1854:—

General Soimonof commanded the right army-corps, consisting of 29 battalions, 38 guns = 17,500 men.

General Pauloff led the left army-corps, consisting of 20½ battalions, 96 guns = 13,500 men.

Thus, these two corps comprised 49½ battalions, 134 guns = 31,000 men.

The corps destined to operate before Chorguna under Gortchakof

to statements so discrepant, we should probably deliver no improper verdict, if we decided that there was a slight exaggeration on one side, and some abridgement on the other.

With the tactical part of the battle of Inkermann, military criticism has little to do. There was a surprise. There was no manœuvring. The time for professional craft had slipped away unperceived. Fierce action, stubborn "pluck" alone might save the day. While you slept the enemy reached your gate. You started up 'twixt waking and sleeping. With muddled wonder you tumbled into the murky morning. You closed with the Muscovite anyhow and everywhere. You waged a murderous Donnybrook fair fight in the dark. In the end you got the best of it. *Voilà tout.*

To what causes are we to assign this memorable success? First, and foremost, to the indomitable persistence with which the regimental officers and soldiers maintained the battle till the arrival of French assistance. Secondly, to the effective fire of the Minié rifle, "*ce feu violent des carabines*," as General Dannenberg described it.

In what order did the combatants fall to? The British worked in thin loose lines; the Russians in columns of companies. Only a few paces intervened between the opposing muzzles; hence, the English Minié having for its target a human mass, a large proportion of bullets reached the core of that mass—each well-aimed ball, killing and mutilating in its course several men; but the rude firelock of the Muscovite, directed at a mere human thread, could at best hurt one soldier. The superiority of our weapon certainly told immensely in our favour.

was composed of 16 battalions, 58 squadrons, 100 guns = 20,000 men.

The garrison of Sevastopol, under the orders of Lieutenant-General Moller, consisted of 30½ battalions, 16 guns = 20,000 men.

There was also on the Mackenzie heights, a body of 6 battalions, 36 guns = 3,600 men



With many eminent military qualities the Russian wants dash. His courage would seem to be passive not active. Unexpectedly received, on gaining the brow of the plateau with that *feu violent*, he halted, and began firing in return; thus placing himself at a disadvantage, thus neutralizing the tactical effect of his columns, the functions of which ought to have been fiercely aggressive. Had he, at the commencement of the battle, pushed those columns resolutely forward, it follows, nearly as a matter of course, that, by the sheer momentum of his heavy masses, the British lines would have been broken through, and trampled down utterly. It would have been a question of weight alone. As it was, no devotion, no exertions on the part of the Russian officers, could, at the outset, spur their battalions to one grand combined rush. Time was frittered away in a series of persevering but desultory attacks, which were invariably repulsed, thanks—as I have already said—to English valour and English fire-arms.

As the British, at no period of the day, possessed heavy bodies of troops, with which to withstand the impetus of other heavy bodies "charging with incredible fury and determination," it follows, that what has been written respecting "desperate encounters between masses of men maintained with the bayonet alone" is erroneous. Beyond doubt, conflicts with cold steel occurred, but they were isolated combats carried on between little groups of Guardsmen and Russian bands, which had sprung bravely from out backward columns.

The Russian writer, before alluded to, thus describes the plan of attack:—"General Soimonoff with the corps from Sevastopol (10th division) was to march out to the left of the Malakhoff hill, climb the western (left) side of the Careening ravine, and throw himself upon the left wing

of the English army, in order to keep them occupied, while General Pauloff, with the 11th division, was to proceed from the northern camp near Inkermann, and cross the Tchernaiia bridge, in order to reach the plateau by the hollow way, and attack the English right. By these simultaneous attacks it was hoped that the English army would be destroyed. But to keep the French on their own ground, and to prevent them from assisting the English, it was arranged that, besides opening a general fire from the batteries, General Timofjeff should make a false attack upon their left wing, while General Gortchakoff, with Liprandi's corps at Tchorguna operated against the Sapoune height, with the view of keeping Bosquet and his corps of observation in their position on the hill, or of enticing them into the valley." "The supreme command of the troops to be held by General Dannenberg."

This able scheme was, in one very important respect, imperfectly carried out. Soimonoff (who was killed on the occasion) either lost his way in the darkness, or misunderstood his orders. Instead of keeping the left of the ravine, and attacking the British left, he took the right of the ravine. What was the consequence? Suddenly, he found himself on the same ground with Pauloff's brigades, which were assailing the British right; here, the space was too confined to admit of the evolutions of two such considerable bodies of men. They stifled one another's exertions, they thwarted one another's operations, "Hence," say the Russians, "Dannenberg's defeat." Be that as it may, there is no shirking the fact, that our peril, imminent at one time, would have been increased ten-fold, had Soimonoff realized his instructions.

It has been remarked that, supposing this unfortunate officer to have pursued the route chalked out for him, he must have been crushed by the fire of our five-gun battery—not necessarily. In the first place, Menschikoff and



Dannenberg, aware of the (to them) awkward position of that work, had taken precautionary measures. In the words of the author just quoted, "Soimonoff was desired to set out at five a.m., in order to pass the most dangerous point before daylight." Secondly—considering the completeness of the surprise elsewhere—it is likely that the 10th division would have got parallel with the dreaded battery (*ergo* out of harm's reach) without being perceived; and, even if its march had been discovered, the fire with which the advance would have been met, must, owing to the darkness, have been at random, and, therefore, comparatively ineffective. In short, I cannot think that the execution of this particular attack was beyond the verge of possibility.

General Canrobert has been blamed for not pursuing the enemy more vigorously at the conclusion of the battle. In my humble opinion, the French commander exercised a wise discretion in holding hard when he did. What in all probability would have been the consequence of hotter pursuit? First, the destruction of a few hundreds more Russians. Secondly, the exposure of the Zouave bloodhounds to the fire of the ship-guns. Thus, while the enemy suffered, the French would suffer too; and men being at this period far more valuable to the Anglo-French than to the Russians, it is obvious that Canrobert's loss, although perhaps numerically less, would have been relatively greater than Menschikoff's loss. Under the circumstances of the case but one motive would have justified Canrobert in more forward pursuit—the hope of seizing and holding the town by virtue of the chase. In the then spent condition of the allies, such hope was out of the question.

Amen to Inkermann. To England and France that 5th of November will be a day of national pride for ever. To their armies it brought salvation and glory. But

Russia it set wailing and gnashing her teeth ; to her army it bore unmitigated disaster and bitterness of spirit. Not merely did she lose thousands of her bravest sons—that was a small matter ; but a desperate and subtle effort, the end of which, to the eye of human wisdom, seemed vengeance and annihilation of the invader, an effort which the 10th and 11th divisions, at a fearful cost of life and money, marched from Odessa to undertake, an effort which was sanctified by religious ceremonial, and quickened in its progress by the presence of the Czar's children, Nicholas and Michael, had failed utterly. Officer-like skill, soldierly daring, numerical superiority had gone for nothing. English, French, despised Turks, still troubled the soil of Muscovy—

—————" O God thy arm was here,  
And not to us, but to thy arm alone,  
Ascribe we all."————

## CHAPTER XIX.

## DEATH'S HEAD AND CROSS BONES.

A tear for the slain—Hospital tents—The orderly's load—Want of towels and sponges—Royalty amongst the wounded—A walk over the field—Russian wounded—Around the sand bag battery—The "last act" of an old comrade—Death from bullet and bayonet—In front of the battery—Trophy seeking—Within the battery—Camp of Second Division—Destruction of horses—*Physique* of Russian troops—Mr. Layard—Burying the dead—Firing on funerals, and stabbing the fallen—Sir George Brown—"Why did ammunition fail?"—Brave recruit—Who reaped the harvest of the "Soldiers' Battle?"

The events of the preceding day had been of a kind so shocking and bewildering, that, on awakening on the morning of the 6th, you could scarcely realize their actual occurrence only a few hours before. Was it some horrid night-mare? Could it be true that in one regiment eight officers, with whom you had been living for months, nay, years, on terms of close friendship, were no more?—some beneficently shot to death in the twinkling of an eye; others but just expired, after lingering awhile very masses of wounds: struck down, in the first instance, with bullets, and then, as they weltered in the ground, gored with the bayonets of merciless enemies. Blessed be their memories,

braver gentlemen never bore arms. We laid those eight corpses in one grave. As side by side they had ever fought, so still side by side they await the call of the last trumpet.

The hospital-tents were shambles. On all sides, might have been seen surgeons, their naked arms smeared with blood, hacking, sawing, gashing, probing, plastering. On all sides, resounded shrieks of agony mingled with dying moans, and incoherent prayers.

Passing by one of the operating tents, I observed an orderly come out of it, absolutely laden with freshly amputated limbs, which the fellow flung down behind an adjacent bush, with as much indifference as if he had been bred up in the ghastly occupation. That reeking heap of lopped legs and arms—bloody boots, trowsers, and sleeves still sticking to them—was a rare monument to “the pomp and circumstance of glorious war.”

So poverty-stricken in medical ways and means were the field-hospitals that, in a case which came to my knowledge, there would have been a dearth of sponges wherewith to wipe away the gore from shattered bones, and raw stumps, had not an officer, who fortunately owned a couple of those precious things, given them up for the use of his unhappy comrades.

On this tragic morning the Duke of Cambridge did himself much honour. Accompanied by his aide-de-camp, the brave and popular Macdonald, the Royal General was assiduous in his attentions to the wounded guardsmen—sympathising in cheering tones with the livid wretches that still breathed, and not forgetting to drop tears of manly sorrow upon the mangled clay of those who had completed their last tour of earthly duty.

About nine a.m. a friend and myself set forth to inspect the field of blood. Immediately after quitting the camp, traces of the strife began to appear. First of all, a few round shot and shell splinters showed themselves; then



came a corpse or two; the number of these lethal witnesses increasing with every onward step we took. At length, we reached the hill of the famous sand-bag battery. Human eye has seldom gazed on a spectacle so horrifying. Every phase of man's misery was represented higgledy-piggledy, on that little stage—torment unutterable, the last rattle, and "dusty death." The English and French wounded had all been removed by this time; but the smitten Russians lay huddled in groups: they had crawled together for the sake of warmth, for the night had been frosty. Some of the suffering wretches prayed to us in heart-rending accents for water; some groaned heavily—these were beyond heeding anything; others glared hatefully at us without deigning a word—these were veterans of the Hungarian war. An old corporal, shivering with cold, but so hurt that he could not creep out of the shade of the bush beneath which he lay, twitched my cloak as I passed, and pointed wistfully to where the sun was merrily shining a yard or two off. I understood the appeal, and taking him by the collar of his coat, dragged him into the cheerful warmth. There was no great charity in this, and yet the poor soldier, with a beautiful expression of gratitude upon his wan face, tried to kiss the hem of my garment. Most of the Russians appeared to have been shot about the head or legs. Spots of deepest red burned on their sunken cheeks, and their eyes were bright with fever.

We are close on the gorge of the battery, so we pick our steps carefully, lest we tread on death, which has possession of every yard of ground. Carcasses of man and brute (scarce a horse that entered the field hereabout came out of it alive), English bearskins, Russian forage-caps, Zouave fez, muskets, rifles all bespattered with clotted blood and brains, are thickly tumbled about. Devilish medley! Look on the faces of the fallen, and mark how various is their



aspect. Here, for example, lies a soldier of my own company. In life he was a handsome fellow, but there is such a saintly serenity about his countenance now, so pure and unearthly in outline have his features grown, that, had it not been for a peculiarity in the colour and wave of his beard, I might have failed to recognize him—"he looked so grand when he was dead."

It is evident, from the posture of his stiffened arms, from the cartridge which remains between his lips, that the fatal bullet struck the hero to the heart, as he was in the very act of firing his rifle. The only exception to the perfectness of the attitude is that, the fingers having relaxed their grasp, the musket has dropped therefrom. He could have suffered no pain, not the merest throe between Mortality and Immortality. This peculiarity of instantaneous death is quite common; within twenty paces of my dear comrade, a French Chasseur d'Afrique lies stark on his back, with the right hand raised to the peak of his *kepi*: he must have been hit whilst saluting an officer, to whom probably he was delivering a message. On the other hand, men slain with bayonet stabs exhibit no such heavenly calm. Their features are convulsed; leaden orbs bulge from their sockets; their mouths are wide open, their blackened tongues protrude; mud and grass are held in their clenched fists; the blood-sloken soil is rutted with the frantic violence of their expiring struggles.

We stand upon the parapet of the battery, and look around. Politicians would talk less lightly of war, could they sometimes step from their libraries into a field like this. Below us (towards Inkermann) where a little space is clear of shrubs, appears a mass of corpses—layer upon layer—sometimes three or four deep. Nor is this all; the glowing sunshine forces the ghastliest details of the slaughter into bold relief; involuntarily your eye

rests on statuesque waxy faces, and waxy hands, upraised as if in supplication ; often too, your eye blanches, as it catches the wholly naked, or half naked, glistening, blood-besmeared form of a Russian officer, stripped, for the sake of his trowsers or shirt, by some poor starving fellow—small blame to him.

Everywhere the spoiler is busy. Soldiers of both nations, sailors, royal and mercantile, are bending over the dead, turning over the corpses, fumbling about their cold breasts and legs. They search for "trophies"—as the military medals, the brazen crucifixes, and little pictures of saints, hung round the necks of the Russians, and the dollars frequently hidden in their garters, are termed : such *gages de guerre* found ready sale among the officers.

A glance at the state of things within the *enceinte*, tells how desperately that little battery was contended for,—the hideous contortion of divers countenances speaks of bayonets stabbing hard ; the shocking aspect of other faces, every feature positively beaten down into purple jelly, "sans eyes, sans nose, sans everything," bears witness to bludgeoning with butt ends.

Returning home by the 2nd Division Camp, we examined the butchery in that quarter. It wore a different complexion from the *aceldama* we had just quitted. Here perhaps, were fewer signs of the lively prick of steel, but far more evidence of the tremendous action of big guns. On all sides, the earth was ripped up, furrowed, corduroyed by the iron tornado. In one place, half a dozen men would seem to have been felled by the same round shot. In another, the splinters of a single shell had rent an entire group limb from limb ; multitudes of killed artillery-horses, ammunition-ponies, ambulance-mules, gave colour and variety to the grim picture. In truth, the poor brutes had been great sufferers ; besides those laid low in harness, numbers had been smitten down, while hobbled. I re-

member remarking, during the battle, a "baggage" in sad plight; he was tethered; he could not break loose; so, round and round the picket-pin he trotted, snorting, squealing, pricking up affrighted ears, as shell or shot struck the ground in his neighbourhood. By a miracle, this sorry jade escaped without a scratch.

The utilitarian *Zou-Zous* did not allow so much flesh to be wasted. Barely was the fight done, before they began to cut steaks out of the better-conditioned horses,—an example which was wisely followed by some "old hands", among the English.

Near the Windmill we found several hundred slightly wounded Russians lumped together within hurdles, like sheep in a pen. As to appearance, they were generally inferior to the tall, broad-shouldered, young soldiers we had met on the Alma. Nevertheless, it was plain from their worn leathery cheeks, bristling moustaches, and the Hungarian medals on their breasts, that they were of seasoned stuff. In a professional sense, therefore, they might have been better troops than their brawnier, and fresher-faced countrymen. Be that as it may, Russian regiments differ widely, as regards *physique*; most of the men slain in and about the two-gun battery being as fine stout fellows as I ever beheld; while others, stretched upon the slopes where the Light Division had acted, looked somewhat seedy specimens of manhood.

Amongst those I saw ruminating o'er "Thermopylæ's sepulchral strait" was the well-known Mr. Layard. This gentleman is a soldier in all but the name: he crossed the Alma under fire; by day and by night, in weather fair and foul, he visited the trenches; he was conspicuous in the thick of yesterday's press; and, a few years' ago, he accompanied Omar Pacha in a stiff campaign against the Albanians. In practical military experience, therefore, this eminent civilian need not fear comparison with most of our generals.



At mid-day, commenced the drear duty of burying the dead ; it was a simple process : wherever carcasses lay in plenty, there, we dug deep pits, each pit being capable of holding fifty or sixty bodies. When these graves were filled to the brim, a thin top-dressing of earth temporarily concealed their contents ; I say temporarily, because the winter rains subsequently washed away much of the covering soil, and horrors and rottenness unutterable came to light.

The monstrous conduct of the Russians, in firing on burying parties, actually in the performance of their sad offices, added to the fact that several of our officers and soldiers had been foully bayoneted, as they lay wounded on the ground, by infuriated Muscovite demons, stirred up hot wrath throughout the camp. In the moody glare of the soldiers' eyes, in the suggestive manner with which horny hands played with bayonet hilts, one read—"Retaliation—as good as you gave, on our next meeting." To prevent, if possible, the war assuming this cruel character, Generals Canrobert and Raglan addressed a joint letter of remonstrance to Prince Menschikoff. In his reply, the imperial commander excused the stabbing, (assuming for a moment such barbarity to have been perpetrated by his countrymen) with the plea that the naturally mild Russians were exceedingly exasperated by the desecration of certain churches, &c., by the Allies. The firing on funeral parties his Excellency tried to explain away, by stating that the grave-diggers had been mistaken for detachments engaged in fortifying the position.

To the generous nature of the English soldier it was mainly owing that acts so repugnant to humanity and civilization did not lead to *guerra al cuchillo*. Quick to quarrel, the rank and file soon forget and forgive ; hence, after the first ebullition of their rage had subsided, they thought no more of vengeance, but only how best they might alleviate the agonies of a fallen foe.

About 2, p.m., great numbers of English wounded were forwarded in ambulance waggons and arabas to Balaclava, there to await conveyance to the great hospital at Scutari. Poor fellows ! theirs was a sad fate ; very many were doomed to the confession that the sharpest griefs are not those dealt by hostile lead and iron. Of the Russians, such of the bad amputation cases as survived the knife—they were not numerous—were ultimately despatched to Odessa under a flag of truce. At that singularly fortunate city, the reception of the maimed is reported not to have been particularly warm. The less seriously injured officers and soldiers proceeded to Constantinople, England, and France, as prisoners of war.

Sir George Brown, the most remarkable name in our casualty list, showed, at this time, a stout example to the army ; here was an old man badly wounded, whom no persuasion could induce to retire further from "the front" than the harbour of Balaclava. In that pestilential port he remained on ship-board for some weeks, but his hurt giving no signs of healing, the surgeons insisted on his at least trying the effect of the purer air of the Bosphorus. The change of scene and climate acted like a charm ; unfavourable symptoms vanished hourly, and in a very short time (after his arrival in the Golden Horn) the Peninsular hero was again seen amid the tents of the Light Division. Time often changes our estimate of men and things. In the beginning of 1854, many were ill pleased with Sir George ; at the end of '54, all soldiers regarded him with respectful admiration.

General Canrobert, severely contused on the sword arm by a shell splinter, headed the roll of French wounded. This brave officer, it is said, seldom comes out of action without bearing on his person, a mark more or less painful of the fray ; I can well believe it, if his ordinary conduct before the enemy be of a piece with his behaviour



Inkermann ; more than once I caught sight of him in the heart of the fight, notable from afar by reason of his escort of Chasseurs, and the tricolor guidon borne aloft by his side. It is not to be supposed that such cavalcade pomp is altogether fool-hardy vanity. By attracting the notice of the enemy, gaudy splendour of retinue may endanger to some extent the General to whom it appertains ; but to this disadvantage is joined a counter-balancing advantage. The fluttering flag and the showy following specially point out to division-leaders, aides-de-camps, and others, *where* the Commander-in-Chief may be met with :—a Head-Quarter Staff, imbedded in the smoky turmoil of battle, and unmarked by any very eye-striking peculiarity, is as a needle in a bundle of hay.

It will be remembered that the small arms ammunition ran out at a critical moment. By some, the exhaustion has been attributed to the carelessness of the officers, who (they say) must have neglected to ascertain whether the soldiers' pouches were adequately supplied or not. This accusation may be answered thus—First, in the darkness and hurry of Inkermann morning it was not possible to examine the pouches ; but, for all that, we may be sure they were well filled, because the men themselves—old soldiers every one—would have been ready enough to complain, had food for their Miniés been scarce. Secondly, the legitimate expenditure of powder and shot was, of necessity, very great. Thirdly, a ruinous leakage of ammunition takes place whenever and wherever there is firing—even on a park field-day—mainly, in consequence of the awkward position of the cartouche-box. I have frequently seen half-a-dozen cartridges drop out of the pouch while the thick-fingered soldier was fumbling

an officer of the Rifles tells me that,  
of his fellows entreated  
captain, will ye assist

me to a 'ca-artridge' out of me *pooche*, for, bad luck to it, the divil a *wone* can I git hould on!" Perhaps the ingenious Sir Thomas Troubridge might devise a remedy for such dangerous inconvenience. The fixing of a couple of small supplementary pouches to the waist-belt in front might be handy for the soldier; or else the waist-belt might be furnished, along the front, with little sockets for the reception of cartridges (after the manner of the Circassian baldrics); at all events, the subject is worthy the attention of the Horse Guards.

When all behave well, it is invidious, often unjust, to particularize individual exploits. I cannot, however, forbear to tell how a recruit, just landed in the Crimea, did and dared on the 5th November. The lad was servant to another lad, an ensign, who on this occasion chanced to be on picquet in Canrobert's redoubt. After his master had breakfasted, the hero valet returned, as the custom was, to camp with the "tea things." On arriving there, he heard the roar and clash of battle; he heard, too, from the drummers, as they brought in the wounded, that "our chaps was hard put to it." This was enough for the brave youth; he donned his belts, snatched up his rifle, and rushed into the *melée*; there he laid about him as doughtily as the best, till the Guards were ordered away from the Sand-bag charnel-house; then, but not till then, did he hurry back to the tents, for it was time to begin the preparation of "the governor's" dinner: a duty which, in the simple-minded fellow's opinion, nothing should be allowed to interfere with. And so it came to pass that, precisely at the appointed hour, this chivalrous cook, his garments stained with blood, the smoke and sweat of war soiling his honest face, might have been observed hastening to the picquet with Ensign ——'s boiled pork and biscuit. On the master requiring the man to explain the peculiar offensiveness of his appearance, the latter coolly and ingenuously

narrated how, in the interval between his master's meals, "he had made bold to lend the battalion a hand agin the Rooshians."

I question whether the Crimean campaign, fertile as it was in acts of personal courage, gave birth to a brighter instance of pure, deliberate bravery than the above. The ideas of our authorities, on the subject of military merit, being occasionally incomprehensible, it is doubtful whether the remarkable conduct of this peasant Bayard has been rewarded. I regret to add, that I have forgotten his really illustrious name: the note, which I made of the circumstance on the spot, having been lost.

Englishmen have pronounced INKERMANN the Soldiers' Battle. Frenchmen have styled it "*La victoire des soldats.*" For all that, the first fruits of our country's gratitude were not for the regimental officers and soldiers. The dauntless valour, and matchless tenacity of purpose that had put to rout Dannenberg's skill and ferocity, for a time "withered in the cold shade." But on generals and staffs honours descended thickly. Lord Raglan received a Field-Marshal's *bâton*; every member of the staff, whether engaged under fire or not, obtained a step of brevet rank. The army was dissatisfied; but the injustice done was too flagrant to pass unnoticed. In Parliament, Mr. Layard, Lord Goderich, Sir De Lacy Evans, and a few others warmly advanced the claims of the working officers. Out of doors, the newspapers generally advocated the same good cause. At last, public feeling was aroused, and then, in the eleventh hour, came a partial redress. I should like to know how the *bond fide* soldier would have fared, if England had had an obsequious parliament, and a gagged press, during the Russian war.

## CHAPTER XX.

## ODDS AND ENDS.

Second Division—The door locked at last—Lord Raglan and Sir De Lacy Evans—Council of War—Assault postponed—The tour of duty—"Give me the spirit, Master Shallow"—Biscuit and bread—Canrobert's gift—"Old Jamaica"—Fuel—Clothing—"Our altered looks"—Vermin—Good Samaritans—A problem—Camp-auctions—Procrastination—Mr. Filder.

On the night of the 5th, a French brigade, consisting of two battalions of Zouaves and one of Marines, under an officer of note, Colonel (now General) Cler, was pushed to the support of our 2d Division; a strong body of Ottoman Foot marched up from Balaclava for a like purpose; and the remains of the Light Cavalry, quitting the vicinity of head-quarters, whereabout they had been picketted since the glorious calamity of the 25th of October, took post near the Windmill.

As the sun went down upon the Golgotha, Turks were set to throw up a breastwork along the flank which had just been so desperately fought for; and when the burying was almost over (on the evening of the 7th, I think) fatigue-parties of French, Turks, and English commenced



more substantial works for the defence of the army on that side. Recent events having opened the eyes of authority, the shoulder was put vigorously to the wheel. There was no longer a question respecting the numerical superiority of the Russian forces over our own ; there was no longer a doubt that a road, screened by overhanging cliffs, ran along the southern shore of the great harbour into the town, a fact, it is said, which hitherto General Airey had refused to credit. Hence, the fortification of an all-important point, which, previously to the battle, had either been considered unnecessary, or had been pronounced impossible of achievement with the means at disposal, was actually executed with sorely straightened means after the battle. In a word, few hands contrived to do what comparatively many hands had been judged incapable of doing. "Where there's a will there's a way."

Here, a word or two on an occurrence which has been much misrepresented. The battle of Inkermann, it is stated, was but just ended, when an aide-de-camp informed Sir De Lacy Evans that Lord Raglan wished to speak to him. This message seems to have been sent by his Lordship merely for the considerate purpose of requesting the General, on account of his evident physical unfitness for exertion, to return to his ship.

But now was a conjuncture in which it behoved every superior officer who felt strongly to speak his mind openly ; and, it is known, that the able leader of the 2nd Division did feel strongly ; especially so with respect to some of those mismanagements, which, a little later, were destined to raise a righteous storm of indignation throughout the length and breadth of England. In various subsequent publications, we find General Evans represented as having, at this time, regarded the state of the army as critical and most unsatisfactory. Had any competent officer another opinion ?



How, day by day, our slender forces were dwindling away. How greatly the strength of the allied armies had been lessened by the narrowly won victory of the 5th—by which we gained not a single foot of ground. How worse than useless were the dribblets of boy recruits occasionally arriving—only to crowd the hospitals.\* The certainty that winter would speedily be upon us—and find us half naked, and in every way unready to face frost and rain. The knowledge that no effective English re-inforcements were expected—had not even been applied for! it was said—were considerations which painfully engaged the thoughts of the more experienced of our commanders.†

According to several independent writers, whose sole object was to declare the truth, without fear or favour, none of the above-mentioned circumstances had escaped the practised eye of General Evans. Indeed they weighed heavy on his heart. To crown his misgivings concerning arrangements in general, he had been distinctly informed in

\* *Vide* Lord Hardinge's evidence before Sevastopol Committee (4th Report).

† The Earl of Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle stated before the Sevastopol Committee (3rd and 4th Reports), that the Cabinet was kept in ignorance of the real state of the army, up to "a very late period." With the exception of a hint (dated Nov. 3, 1854) from Lord Raglan, that "he would have been better satisfied if he could have occupied Balaclava in greater strength," the Government, it would actually appear, received no official representation of the melancholy condition of the troops before January, 1855!—Evidence of Earl of Aberdeen, Qs. 21358, 21359, 21360, 21362.—Evidence of the Duke of Newcastle, Qs. 14474, 14483.

Mr. Sidney Herbert (Secretary at War, and member of the Cabinet) stated before the aforesaid Committee (No. 19777) that "the operations were expected to be of the character of a *coup-de-main*." Again, (No. 19877) "Lord Raglan had entire, unlimited control and management over all the operations,—everything and every person in the East!"

writing, by the English and French chiefs, that exigencies elsewhere prevented them complying with his demands for additional strength on the right flank. Hence, the most accomplished soldier in the British camp may easily be supposed to have begun almost to despair of due precautions being taken for the security of a point, on which the safety of the army confessedly hinged.

Well, then, Sir DeLacy Evans—having, it would appear, come to the conclusion (which after all was an irresistible conclusion) that the inadequate means of defence allotted to a vital part of our line would be allowed to continue as insufficient as before, or perhaps be still further weakened, thus putting in jeopardy the very existence of the host, and (what was of minor importance) unfairly hazarding the reputation of the officer in charge of the Inkermann flank—deemed it his duty to warn Lord Raglan during the short interview in question, that the re-embarkation of the army ought now to be viewed in the light of a contingency hanging by a thread, as an alternative, which no man could tell how soon, might have to be accepted, and, therefore, that it ought immediately to be prepared against; for, in the event of the Allies being suddenly driven back, or dislodged, without such preparation, the results could not fail to be disastrous. To this emphatic counsel Lord Raglan made no reply.

It is possible, however, that for once, that warning voice fell on no unheeding ear; nay, it is probable that an admonition so solemn from its associations of time and place, had some share in inducing the Commander-in-Chief to initiate active measures for the defence of the position. A breastwork, we know, was commenced an hour or two after the meeting of the two generals; and French and Turks camped on the endangered ground that very evening.

It was fortunate for the interests of Europe, that the

French Government, thoroughly awake to the peril menacing their arms, put forth prodigious energy in the emergency, and quickly placed vast reinforcements at Canrobert's disposition.

On the 6th, a council of war was held at Lord Raglan's quarters. Besides our Commander-in-Chief and General Canrobert, there were present on the English side, Generals Burgoyne, England, Airey, and Rose ; Generals Bosquet, Forey, Bizot, and De Martimprez, appeared for the French ; Admirals Lyons and Bruat represented the fleets. Little difference of opinion, it is understood, arose out of the discussions of that council-chamber. After considering the losses sustained by the victors on the previous day, calculating the power still at the enemy's service, taking into account the strength and armament of his works, and expatiating on wet and cold as evils with which the heavens were pregnant, the assembled chiefs resolved that all idea of an assault on the place must be postponed *sine die*, and that men and munitions from England and France must be pressed for.

Toward the end of October, or early in November, the Allied Generals, we are told, had made up their minds to attack Sevastopol by storm—the 6th of the latter month being the day fixed for the execution of the design. So after all, we ought to be thankful, it may be, to Dannenberg, for stealing a march upon us ; for great as our losses at Inkermann were, it is highly probable they would have been double, had we attempted to storm Todleben's bastions at this stage of the campaign. With an army in our rear, with powerful corps menacing our almost undefended right, with a preponderating weight of metal full in our front, it is not difficult to conclude that a rush upon Sevastopol at this time must have fallen short of the mark, if indeed it did not result in irretrievable disaster. Those who dissent from such an inference must surely



forget the fate of the onslaught made upon the city a few months later, under circumstances infinitely more favourable to ourselves, than any which existed in November 1854.

The ten days succeeding the battle were unmarked with important military performances. The siege stood still. The Russians, busied probably in making up their fortifications for the winter, only occasionally disquieted the Anglo-French batteries with heavy salvos.

About this time Englishmen began a horrible contention with foes, worse than human. The weather, which for the last three weeks had been changeable, now gave unmistakeable symptoms of what it would be during the next four months. Rain, alternated with wind: the one, often pouring like a water-spout, the other chill as though blown across ice mountains. In consequence, the soldier was generally cold and seldom dry. Let us glance at his way of life. One night, the poor fellow was drenched to the bone as he squatted in the muddy trench. At day-break he went back to his dank lair under canvas, he wrapped himself, diseased and exhausted, in his thin, foul blanket, he prayed for sleep, and, despite chattering teeth, numbed feet, dripping rags (he had no change of raiment), "Nature's soft nurse" did not stand aloof. A few hours, and he was on duty again—one of a working-party that dug graves, or built parapets—if the morning was fine, the exercise dried his clothes, stimulated his languid circulation, supplied his aching limbs, and he returned home, in improved condition, once more to snatch a little repose. With to-morrow's dawn the cry of the orderly-sergeant dragged him anew out of his tent—to fall in for picket. This service was a mitigated edition of duty in the trench. He could light a fire on the hill-side, and walk about to keep his blood astir; but against the elements he had, as "in the front," no protection; and, after twenty-four

hours' watch, crawled back to camp—in aspect, but congealed milk and water, a labourer, you might say, whose last stroke of work was done. Not so; ere the light of the succeeding morning, the noble fellow stumbles along the “Valley of the Shadow of Death” *en route* to the batteries. In addition to the debility caused by want of sufficient rest, by want of proper clothing, the most exhausting of maladies (diarrhoea of the veriest acrid type) tears his entrails; and yet, there he is alongside his mess-mates, resolute to drudge and to fight, as long as he can put one shrunk leg before the other.

As all who have jostled much against men will believe, the superiority of mind over matter shone gloriously out during this war. Fragile, marrowless creatures—very “Forcible Feebles”—drained and sapped with disease, clung like leeches to their duty, till death relieved them “off guard,” or till they sank powerless to the earth through downright muscular collapse. *Per contra*, instances are known of strong men—regular Pistols—famous in peace for truculence of sentiment and the length of their bilboes—comminatory Bulls of Bashan in the mess-room or canteen—singing small at the mere approach of privation, or sickening at the first smart of a flesh wound.

Reflection on this seeming paradox leads to curious speculation. Theory preaches, and very properly preaches—that all the officers of an army ought to be sturdy “Bull-calves,” sound in wind and limb; but, if this rule be very strictly carried out, what's the consequence? Why, that many an ardent spirit of the true military temper is excluded from the service. For example, supposing the “cock-pit” had been shut to a delicate youngster eighty-seven years ago, the name of NELSON might never have been a household-word amongst us; and had an aspiring lad been refused a pair of colours in



1794, on account of his pallid cheek, or the lowness of his stature, the Conqueror of Scinde might not have wielded a "good sword." Macaulay describes one of the most resolute soldiers of the 17th century (our own William III.) as "an asthmatic skeleton;" and his renowned rival (the Duke of Luxembourg) the ablest captain of the age, as "an hump-backed dwarf." It would appear, therefore, that, while some plan should be devised for keeping the Army List clear of the "well-connected" halt, blind, and deaf—care should be taken that the terms of such a regulation be not too stringently drawn up, or hypercritically enforced. How wisely said Jack Falstaff—"Care I for the limb, the thews, the stature, bulk, and big assemblance of a man? Give me the spirit, Master Shallow."

The animal food of the army was now, almost uninterruptedly, salt-pork. Vegetables scarcely ever reached "the front;" lime-juice had been unaccountably forgotten; *ergo*, scurvy; from this cause, many men had teeth so loose, and gums so tender, that it was pain and grief to them to gnaw their flinty biscuit; it was therefore considered a lucky chance, when a soldier exchanged his portion of this gritty "staff of life," with a Zouave, for a hunch of the wholesome bread with which our Allies were supplied. Nor was such barter uncommon, for Frenchy found English biscuit (when pounded into powder) capital thickening for his *soupe*. One day, General Canrobert presented to every British soldier an abundant ration of bread. The precious gift was received with cheers, and devoured in mouths universally watering.

Sometimes the Commissariat served out rice. As this mess was both popular, and peculiarly adapted to the then weakly condition of the military stomach, it is to be regretted, that a larger allowance was not daily distributed.

But the privates' cardinal luxury was the "go" of rum, which, warming up the cockles of their plucky hearts, did them a world of good. Of a truth, the effects of that cordial sup cannot be conceived by those who have never been forced to make bricks without straw. Old Jamaica was an elixir of life. Of the abomination "green coffee" I have already spoken. The great and ever increasing difficulty of procuring fuel added considerably to the sufferings of the troops. Regimental officers and soldiers, owing to the almost continuous pressure of their duties, had seldom leisure to go forth and seek firing. Grubbing out of the earth roots (which were the best combustibles within reach) was a task requiring time, but—there the shoe pinched—time was very rarely at the disposal of the rank and file; hence the pork was occasionally gorged raw, whereby of course its naturally indigestible properties were greatly augmented. It is strange that, immediately after the army sat down before Sevastopol, steps were not taken to supply this grievous want. No one could doubt that, in such a position, soldiers must of necessity be hard worked. No one could avoid remarking how bare the plateau was of things that would burn. No one was ignorant that transports were lying idle, ready for a job—but yet, no one (in authority) stirred in the matter till it was too late.

The soldiers' clothing had fallen into beggarly plight. Since quitting Malta these rags had been worn day and night. The material, of which coatees and trousers were composed, was radically bad. Camp life in Bulgaria had not been conducive to the preservation of perishable baize. Accordingly the army landed at Old Fort with at best thread-bare suits. The unfortunate blunder which separated the man from his knapsack (in which a pair of pantaloons and other comforts were packed), and which retained so long at Scutari the squad-bags (containing

shell jackets and sundry necessities), robbed him of a change of raiment : consequently, he had few opportunities of drying his regimentals when wet, or of mending them when torn.

So blistered with the sun, so furrowed with cold winds, so frouzy with all manner of uncleanness, appeared our bearded files in November, 1854, in such waifs and strays of outlandish gear were their wasted forms tricked out, that if a mature enthusiast, deriving his ideas of war from the shaven aspect and begilt equipment of a "Birth-day Parade," could have dropped like an aerolite into our lines, he would have been loth most like to credit the evidence of his senses ; the coarse vernacular, at the first flush of amaze, might have been hardly sufficient to convince him that the heroes hurrying about—

"With visage formidably grim  
And rugged as a Saracen,"

were of the same smug, rosy, stock with himself. Where was the scarlet uniform ? Where the fleshy presence of the English peasantry ? Can that boney battalion,

———"Besmear'd,  
As black as Vulcan, in the smoke of war,"

be the once smart, pipe-clayed Fusiliers ? Walk down the ranks and examine the piebald details which constitute each individual's make up. This man wears Russian boots ; that, Russian trousers, "strapped" with leather—spoil of Balaclava. A third is dight in pantaloons of fine cloth in good repair—spoil of Inkermann, peeled from the legs of a Russian officer ; a fourth has assumed the forage cap of his slain enemy ; and so on, from right to left.

By incessant use the men's linen had rotted into shreds ; and vermin increased and multiplied in all our quarters. I have seen sick arrive at Scutari hospital with scarcely a vestige of shirt, stockings, &c. Yes, with little save a "big coat" to conceal their nakedness. I have seen insects



so minute and innumerable teeming on a wretched fellow's scalp that, at the first glance, the entomologic plague appeared a thick crust of dirt. After the victim's death it was discovered that his brain had been laid bare : his countless tormentors having gnawed away part of the skull—in a word, eaten him alive.

At mention of Scutari, names which ought to be graven deep on English hearts, rise up before my mind's eye: Nightingale, the two Bracebridges, Stafford, and Macdonald. It was chiefly the masterly business habits, the untiring assiduity, the sweet loving-kindness practised in most discouraging circumstances by these admirable persons, that changed a pest-house, shameful to humanity, into a hospital, not unworthy the civilization and benevolence of England.

The soldiers seemed to consider the pitiable condition of their clothing as one of the most baneful of their hardships. It passed their simple comprehensions how it could happen that,—while Britain was the richest country on earth, while their brethren at home talked of nothing and thought of nothing, save the Crimean warfare ; while every English heart prayed with tenderest emotion for the well-being of the army, while numerous ships passed and repassed between Balaclava and Southampton,—the men of Alma, Balaclava, October 26th, and Inkermann, were permitted to go about their business half naked, “in stinking rags that fretted in their own grease,” were fain to strip their fallen foes for the sake of a shirt or pair of breeches, had nothing better to keep off the cold as they lay on the bare ground, in the tents, than a thin blanket apiece, which had done duty at Scutari, Varna, and on the march from “Old Fort” to Balaclava.

The disreputable pickle to which our “kits” had in general been reduced, is practically exemplified in the enormous prices fetched by necessities of life at the sales by auction of the effects of deceased officers ; some of whom,

being recent arrivals in the Crimea, were of course well provided with winter clothing. While richly laced coatees were drugs in the market—no man would look at them—while bran new epaulettes failed to excite a bidding, pea-jackets, woollen socks, trousers, flannel shirts, boots, tobacco, in all its varieties of cigars, shag or Cavendish, realised extravagant prices. To wit, I recollect a private grenadier offering, unsuccessfully, 5s. for a pair of stockings, which had seen better days, and paying 1s. 6d. for a second-hand *dudeen*. A young Captain in the Guards, too, congratulated himself on becoming possessor of a gridiron for the modest sum of £10.

Wherefore this destitution, these tatters, this unwholesome monotony of salt pork? In his "Address before the Chelsea Board," (p. 77) the Quartermaster-General, Sir Richard Airey, K.C.B., stated—"Now (Nov. 6) for the first time we knew that the army would winter in the Crimea. Immediately I took measures for hutting and sheltering the troops." Here a kind of light falls upon the mystery. Although the soldiers were sinking into shabby case as regards uniform when the expedition to the Crimea was projected, no care seems then to have been taken to impress upon the Home Authorities the necessity of immediately refitting the army. Even after ground had been broken before Sevastopol, after the strength of the enemy's fortifications, and the amazing fertility of his resources had become patent to every sentinel in the allied camps, no effort was, as far as we know, made to procure from Scutari the squad bags lying in store there, or to return to the rank and file their abstracted knapsacks. And why? Because, until the day subsequent to Inkermann, Head-Quarters had not conceived the idea that the troops might have to rough out a winter in Crimean Tartary !\*

\* See Earl of Aberdeen's evidence before the Sevastopol Committee (4th Report).



In animadverting on commissariat shortcomings, it is fair to bear in mind that no inconsiderable share of those shortcomings is directly attributable to the state of uncertainty, as to the future of the army, in which Mr. Filder was for long kept. From the outset, the Commissary-General appears to have had his doubts respecting an early issue to the enterprise. Immediately on reaching the heights before the town, he felt it incumbent on him to address Lord Raglan concerning the probable duration of the Anglo-French occupation of the position. To his urgent and not unnatural interrogations no precise answer is said to have been returned—while there was yet time; hence preparations of a magnitude proportionate to the emergency, which ought to have been commenced instantaneously, were adjourned *sine die*. Mr. Filder shrank from building large and vastly expensive measures on the basis of an indecisive correspondence with his General. We know the result.\*

\* Before the Board of General Officers at Chelsea, Mr. Filder stated (p. 358)—“A very serious impediment to the prospective arrangements necessary for the supply of the troops, was the uncertainty of the intended, or even probable, position of the army during the winter, after its landing in the Crimea. The supply of a large force in that season requires, in almost any country subject to great alternations of climate, timely and extensive previous arrangements; but in a situation like that of the besieging force before Sevastopol, it demanded attention as early even as when the army first landed. I had indeed before that expedition was known to be projected, and when it was generally supposed that the troops would be put into cantonments near Constantinople, applied to Lord Raglan for instructions to guide my preparations. I repeated my application when the expedition was on its way, and renewed it in the early part of October, but it was not till the 12th of that month that his Lordship was able to give me any orders whatever on the subject. They then went no farther than directions to lay in a stock of fuel at Scutari (the papers are in the Appendix marked A B and C) and it was only on the 8th of November, when winter had already commenced, that I learnt that the army would remain in the Crimea, and received orders to make provision accordingly.”

## CHAPTER XXI.

## STORM.

Effects of bad weather—Turks melting away—Beginning to blow—Tent in danger—Smash—Off, on the wings of the wind—Where shall we go?—Harbour of Refuge—Colonel Cler's benefaction—Alas! for the sick—"Out at sea"—How the ships fared—Loss of life and goods—Calm—Troop-horses—Mule-litter—Zouave Muleteer—State of the road—Army, a debtor to civilian thought—Poor Balaclava—Circumlocution—Where's the physic?—Why, here are potatoes!—Wounded on board-ship—Dr. Ludlow—Concluding remarks.

The effects of the severe weather, which followed close upon the battle, were sadly visible in the numbers of sick despatched every morning to Balaclava for shipment to Scutari. Many of the old soldiers, whose constitutions had been unbraced in Bulgaria, now broke down. In spite of their great hearts, they had to give in. Of these, the majority died in the foul wards of Selimnieh; the minority, that lived to return to England, in too many instances, enjoy robust health no more.

Through fever and dysentery, the Turkish division was shockingly reduced. The poor men, but lately so tough and healthful-looking, perished like flies in autumn time—victims of neglect and bad food.

On the 11th of November we had a buffeting—alternately storms of wind and rain ; ever and anon the cold extreme ; no possibility of keeping the fires alight. I was on picquet in the rear during this conflict of the elements, and, therefore, had twenty-four hours of roughish duty. What a scurvy batch of half-drowned rats we looked, as we marched back to camp on the 12th.

At midnight, on the 13th, the Russians opened a furious, but not very damaging fire, upon the allied batteries.

In the early morning of the 14th, the inmates of our tent were awakened by the roaring of a mighty rushing wind. At first, we hoped the gale would die away as day advanced. No such luck. Rapidly the tempest waxed fiercer and fiercer ; the tent-pole rocked, the wall-pegs were ripped out of the ground, to the imminent peril of the whole establishment. We shouted for the servants, whose tent stood (or rather had stood, for I believe it was one of the first capsized) a few yards off ; but so loud was the atmospheric din, that some time elapsed ere we could make the trusty fellows hear. When they came to the rescue, the storm was past human mastery. To no purpose uprooted skirting pins were hammered into the slough ; the blast plucked them forth as soon as driven in. All the while, the slackened canvas by turns, flapped madly like a loosened sail, or bellied out like a balloon, or collapsed like a punctured bladder. The pole pitched wildly ; to it we (in the inside) desperately held on ; for it was the key of the arch, the mainstay of our home ; if it went, all must go.

Every moment the fury of the storm rose higher ; every moment the devoted tent swung more violently. No longer a thought about pinning down the walls, the despairing servants tried to hold them down. Vain effort. Within, every hand stuck to creaking pole, every voice screamed impact.

tions. At length, crack ; the beam snapped ; crash, and downfall : six of us were floundering under the wreck of our ancient domicile.

A little kicking and plunging, and we crept from under the suffocating ruins ; oh, woeful scene ! Where's the camp ? Dismantled. Flakes of canvas covered the ground, bear-skin caps by dozens, eddied in the gusts, blankets sped on the wings of the wind toward Sevastopol. Soon, all things moveable—barrels, planks, boxes, wheels of arabas—spun, as though they were shavings, in the maddened air ; and officers, great and small, hale and ill, with chop-fallen countenances, with fuzzy beards, and hair streaming straight in the breeze, crawled hither and thither on their hands and knees in quest of shelter.

For a minute or two, the force, the tearing rage, the frantic shriek, the occasionally blinding rain of the tornado bewildered you. It bore you down. There was no breasting its might. In such a predicament, it is every one for himself ; God for us all ; so each man went his own way. Alone you sought refuge.

After lurching to and fro, beating in all directions like a collier in distress, to avoid the full swing of the tempest, I espied a marquee reeling, but still on its legs. I made for it, and, not without a stiff struggle, ran into port, where I was hospitably received. Being in ill health at the time, I was thankful, God knows how thankful, to have a place to lay my head in ; the mire whereon I rested seemed a bed of down ; the shaky tenement, of which every instant threatened to be the last, was to me a marble palace.

Alone of the Brigade camp that marquee weathered the hurricane. It was the hospice of the neighbourhood. From the fearful morning to the scarcely less-fearful night, dripping, bedraggled outcasts were fumbling at the door for admittance ; we were therefore closely pent for many hours in a steaming hugger-mugger, bred of many breaths,



of soaked garments, and of much tobacco smoke, which at another time would have excited an universal demand for fresh air ; but now, our every thought was concentrated on shelter, hence the nose forgot its sensitiveness, and we voted ourselves comfortable.

By the abrupt toppling of the camp, we had been prevented carrying away our rations ; so that when those in tolerable health began to hanker after dinner, they had to put up with their qualms patiently, or else to dull the edge of appetite by "blowing a cloud ;" for the pork, biscuit, and rum of the officer, whose premises we had invaded, were but as crumbs and thimble-fuls among so many riotous stomachs.

"At length a raven came and fed the hungry."

As night closed over us in howling squalls, accompanied by fitful torrents of hail, rain, and sleet, a voice was heard crying outside, "*Ouvrez, Messieurs ouvrez, s'il vous plait*." It was no weather-beaten Lear that rattled at the shaky threshold, but the Zouave cook of Colonel Cler, commandant of the French brigade hard by. This war-like knight of the stew-pan had been sent by his brave and friendly master to inquire after the health and present domestic condition of Lord —, and, what was more to the purpose, to offer an humble contribution (here, a bundle was thrust through an aperture) to Milord's *petit souper*. When the bundle was found to contain a bottle of Bordeaux, a loaf of bread, and half-a-dozen eggs, we called down blessings on the head of Cler. In the direst extremity of battle thou wast shoulder to shoulder with us, most Christian of Zou-Zous, and in the midst of the whirlwind thou didst remember our necessities.

Abroad, the situation was downright unmitigated wretchedness. Most of the tents having overturned at a very early hour, the soldiers had nothing for it but to brave "the tyranny of the open night ;" so they crouched

closely together in knots under the illusory covert of meagre bushes, or of the little stone walls, which the cooks had built to screen their fires from the wind. In one of these sodden groups cowered a poor woman, who, loving her husband tenderly, had escaped from ship-board a fortnight previously, and smuggled herself up to "the front," where she behaved like a Roman matron—a pattern of patience that nothing could ruffle, of industry that never tired. But if the duty-men suffered, what must have been the misery endured by the sick and wounded, that—half-naked, unfed, almost untended, lying on the splashy earth, rained upon, hailed upon, snowed upon—groaned, gasped, and expired during those dire hours?

About nine p.m. the hurricane abated somewhat; but as the wind moderated, rain by fits spouted forth the more vehemently, and snow fell occasionally. In the short lull of the storm some of the officers and soldiers groped under the ruins of the camp for rum-flasks and biscuit; others sought fresh abiding places; of these hunters after comfort in a quagmire, a young Guardsman, physically small, but morally great, was pre-eminently fortunate. He found a large Commissariat cask, and in it passed the night luxuriously.

But the desolation which this dreadful pother wrought on the heights, was slight, compared with the horrors it evoked on the sea-board.

The waters, lashed into frenzy by the wind, surged in boiling surf breakers on the craggy coast. The air was dusk with spray, tossed up in clouds from the seething hell below; so the amazed men that lay belly-wise on the edge of the Balaclava hills guessed, rather than beheld, the damnation going on at sea. Amid the thunder of the swirling waves, the bellowing of the blast, the boom of distress cannon, were heard, now and again, screams of mortal agony, resounding smashes, as great ships "cracked

like egg-shells, 'gainst the rocks." Noises that made even the blood of the old sailors, glaring with well-trained eyes into the blackness ahead, to run cold.

Wherever peril is, there the English mariner shows the stuff of which he is made. In this horrid emergency, Captain Ponsonby, of the R.M.S. Trent, the mate of the Steam Transport, Tanning, and other sea lions, repeatedly defied death—to give a hand to perishing countrymen. Over and over again were these noble fellows let down by ropes over the brink of the precipice into the foaming cauldron underneath; and thus, were rescued several of the castaway.

On the heights of Balaclava trees of thirty years' growth were wrenched out by the roots, as though they had been saplings. Roofs were twisted off houses in that town. Several cabins were thrown down while huge barrels, ships' boats even, whirled about the streets.

The morning of the 14th found four war steamers and eighteen transports anchored in the Balaclava roadstead. Within the harbour lay thirty ships. Of the four steamers of war that tossed outside, two, the Vesuvius and Retribution, (on board of the latter was the Duke of Cambridge) had a narrow escape of destruction. Of the eighteen merchantmen, nine drove on the rocks, and went to pieces; only twenty-three men being preserved out of those nine crews. The Prince, a splendid vessel, only a day or two arrived from England, with Sappers and diving apparatus on board; the Wild Wave, Rip Van Winkle, and others of large tonnage, were among the lost. Of the nine transports that escaped, seven sustained serious injury, and had many sailors hurt; nor did the ships moored in port weather the gale without scath. They were beaten together by the whirlwind, they had boats ripped from their sides, rigging torn from masts and yards, masts and yards shivered, bulwarks staved in, men wounded by

guns, spars, and heavy gear of all sorts dashing loose about the decks.

At Kamiesch about twenty French transports went ashore ; however, the greater part of their crews and cargoes were saved.

On the Belbec and the Katcha, where the fleets lay at anchor, many French and English men-o'-war lost rudders, and were otherwise damaged. A Turkish frigate lost all her masts overboard, and missed utter wreck by a miracle. Numerous sailing transports foundered hereabout.

At Eupatoria the French line of battle ship *Henri IV.*, 100 guns, struck, and went to pieces—her crew, for the most part rescued. The *Fulton*, French war-steamer, shared a like fate—part of her crew saved. A Turkish frigate broke to bits—all aboard perished. H. M. S. *Cyclops* had a hair-breadth escape.\*

For many days the waves continued to vomit upon the beach fragments and splinters of what had lately been superb A. 1 ships—pride of the nation owning them, wonder and envy of foreigners beholding them. The corpses of the drowned too were flung back to us in scores. In a manner unspeakably shocking re-appeared those poor bodies—mangled and mutilated, the beauty of God's image defaced, mere heads, mere trunks, (the limbs cut away) mere bundles of legs and arms, inextricably interlaced.

It is alleged that this awful visitation cost us 1000 lives, and a million and a half of property. Are we to

\* The *Cyclops* was commanded throughout the Russian war by Mr. R. W. Roberts, R.N., a first-rate seaman, a most zealous and able officer. Unhappily he was only a master in the Navy, consequently, "my Lords" omitted to recognize his great merits. A few months ago, this brave sailor died—"if ever man died, of disappointment, and hope deferred."—See "The Service and the Reward," by G. J. Cayley.



lay such profusion of life and capital solely to the account of the elements! Can we be sure that man had taken every possible precaution against the outbreak of a rude Black Sea gale that human skill and forethought had been taken to the uttermost to meet in ship-shape order a contingency which in a less tremendous form, is not uncommon in the Buxine at that period of the year! Scarcely. What then is responsible! It is hard to say with precision, for government has not cared to sift the matter—the powers that be probably wishing the country to revert in this case as in not a few others, that most convenient of verities—“Nobody’s to blame.”

By daylight next morning 15th, the tempest had blown itself out and there was a dead calm: every man, therefore, that had “a go” left in him, lent a pair of hands to the task of reconstruction. Certain the plateau was in ugly gale—an embodiment of mire, misery, and mischief. Officers and soldiers looked like animated mud images: their matted hair and beard matted with mud, their clothes encrusted with mud, their eyes fishy, their sunken jaws beslobbered with silt. Even worse was the appearance of the Light Cavalry. Of the doomed horses, some with staring coats and drooping heads, stood past their heels in the dismal swamp: others reclined regularly “done up” in the slimy pudding.

Rolling an eye about one could not fail to be struck with the strange fact, that nearly all the Turkish tents in our vicinity had stood out the storm: an enviable state of things, which is, doubtless, referable to two causes. 1. Very crafty pitching, as might be expected from the nomad habits of a large proportion of the Ottoman army. 2. Inferiority in point of altitude, and superiority as regards breadth of basis, when compared with English tents.

The storm worked up to a head, the distemper against

which I had for long been struggling; consequently, the doctors advised my going on ship-board, and with the view of smoothing, as far as practicable, the journey of myself and a wounded friend to Balaclava, the kind and able regimental surgeon borrowed from the principal medical officer of the Brigade Cler, one of the easy mule-litters, which present so remarkable a feature in the French hospital arrangements.

The litter (*cacolet*) consists of two small hair mattresses, spread over a light iron frame, which is slung, pannier fashion, over the back of a stout Provence mule. Each of the mattresses is occupied by a sick soldier, who, by a simple mechanical contrivance, can either lay flat, or be supported in a sitting posture, as may best suit his bodily state. It is necessary, of course, that the driver should unremittingly give heed to the equal adjustment of the burthen; for if the weight incline more to one side than to the other, the beast is distressed, and an accident may occur.

In our instance, nothing could exceed the vigilance which the Zouave in attendance devoted to his mule—a magnificent animal, by the bye, sleek in coat, bright in the eye, elastic in pace, a wholesome contrast to the staggering Rosinantes, into which our once noble troop-horses and active “baggage” were being, by some unkindly process, rapidly transformed; whenever, from a hasty movement on the part of my bed-fellow or myself, one *cacolet* outweighed the other ever so little, the *Zou-Zou* immediately stopped Gil Blas and restored the trim, addressing the while much earnest but polite admonition to ourselves upon the impropriety of sudden changes of position.

Had brave Gil Blas been in bad condition, or been neglectfully driven, we must have come to grief between Inkermann and the harbour; for no description can do justice to the state of the road over which we travelled.

Continuous friction and heaviest pressure had worn away, cut up, ground down whatever man's labour and intelligence had formerly done for this high-way. Although we had run all our stupendous traffic over it, subsequently to the 25th October, we had never put a hand to it. The issue may easily be guessed. The tempest blew, the rain fell, and our only means of communication with the sea was reduced to sheer mud. Mr. Filder, it is stated, fearful of this result, had, a fortnight previous to the catastrophe, warned head-quarters that, unless something were immediately done to repair the trunk line, he might soon find extreme difficulty in feeding the troops. Nothing was done.

But, it may be urged, nothing could be done. As it was, the soldiers were overworked, consequently there were no "hands" available for road mending, and such like. Now, I humbly conceive that some—I do not say sufficient—labour might, at any rate, have been applied to this important purpose, had fatigue parties been economically systematized, but from the night the first sod was thrown up, there was no trifling waste of fatigue-parties. It is remarkable too, that with all their complaints, and they were very natural complaints, relative to want of "hands," the Quarter-master-General's department does not appear to have hit upon the notion that "navvies" might be procured from home to do road-making, &c., while the soldiers were exclusively employed on work under fire. "Navvies," it is true, were subsequently sent out to the Crimea, but their despatch was essentially a civilian idea. Strange, that every military reform should have its source in the non-professional mind. For improvement in dress, arms, and education, we have to thank "Civilians," backed by the Press. This anomaly may be in some degree traceable to the defective condition of army instruction amongst us, and to the uncompromising, not to say dogged, conserva-



tism of many of our superior officers. As the career of a captain or colonel holding "liberal opinions" is rarely a successful career, so do gentlemen, who care to rise in the military profession, keep their mouths shut, and, with great show of zeal, flourish the faded banner of prescription.

To resume: with such sagacious instinct did Gil Blas pick his springy steps through the "Slough (well nigh) of Despond," and so cunningly did the Zouave second his efforts that we sick journeyed quite pleasantly. So well indeed did mule and muleteer work, that our sole danger lay in an unavoidable collision with one of the desperate strings of heavily laden Commissariat "baggagers," that, goaded by the blows and execrations of their drivers, recklessly and painfully floundered headlong on, spirting up the dirt on all sides, and capsizing man or beast that chanced to stick in the mud of their undeviating course.

At dusk, we reached the harbour, and after a few substantial thanks to our French conductor (who certainly deserved all, indeed more than we could give him) and blessings—would they could have taken the appreciated form of oats—on his meritorious mule, we boarded the steamer *Tonning*, the captain and officers of which tight craft received us with no hollow cordiality.

During the few days I remained on board ship, enough passed before my eyes to convince me that, at Balaclava, all official bodies were at logger-heads. Red-tape was in one mighty tangle. Dirt, disorganization, and debauchery, (mis)ruled the roast of that once attractive village; men and horses sank up to their middles in the first-named; offices and departments seemed steeped to the very lips in the second; and, as regards the third, divers soldiers and sailors reeled about unnaturally jovial: not unlikely, poor misjudging fellows, to pay for the dismal facetiousness of to-day's "raki," with the smart of to-morrow's "cat."

The difficulty, bordering on impossibility, of getting a



question answered outright in any *bureau*-cratic quarter, would have been quite diverting, under less grievous circumstances. The unhappy man seeking information was tossed about, like a shuttle-cock, from one circumlocution office to another; *ergo*, after much trouble and more perplexity, he usually threw up his business in disgust, or despair—to take its chance.

Doctors complained that they needed medicines and comforts for the sick, and, judging from the look of Balaclava hospital, their complaints were far from being frivolous; albeit, ships, freighted with the good things, for lack of which brave men died, lay unsearched in the harbour, or were despatched—their cargoes still aboard—to the Bosphorus, on some other errand. In certain cases, too, a most inconvenient mode of stowage had been adopted at home: light hospital stuff lying lowest in the hold, while shot and shell, mortars and 18-pounders, constituted a rather heavy top-dressing; the consequence was, that as soon as the ordnance and ammunition—food of the ogre, War—had been got ashore, the fatigue-men would knock off, their duty done: physic and port-wine—restoratives of ailing men of valour—being unnoticed in their orders.

Vegetables, the value of which would have been beyond price on the “heights,” rotted in large quantities, unregarded here. Potatoes and cabbages, which yonder would have been luxuries, as health-giving as they were palatable, might have been observed floating amidst all manner of nastiness and garbage—not to speak of an occasional corpse and the carcass of a donkey or two—about this stinking port.

I saw hundreds of sick and wounded put on board ship for passage to Scutari. They had to lie on the bare deck anyhow; in most cases, without covering, better than their old watch-coats. The surgeons generally, I am sure

did all that in them lay for these wretched men ; I will mention one young doctor (he is dead, and therefore it is not invidious to name him), Mr. Ludlow, who, it is my firm belief, was the means of preserving many precious lives during a melancholy voyage to Constantinople. His untiring exertions were generously aided by Captain Ponsonby, master of the transport, Trent, who, from his private stores, freely supplied the sick soldiers with port-wine and arrow-root, after the meagre Government allowance of those vital requisites had been expended, which was soon ; for Ludlow, opining the wounded had no chance of life, unless they got plenty of nourishment, plied them constantly with vinous arrow-root—the result was, that not a man died on that passage.

Oh ! for one week in the Crimea of the Duke of Wellington. When the waves run high, and the good ship strains, and the crew tumble about all sixes and sevens, we call to mind old pilots, of whose vigorous wills and firm hands at the helm, our fathers love to tell.

With the great storm, the second act of the Russian War terminated.

In 1854, some disagreeable truths broke upon us. To the surprise of many, our aristocratic military system proved rotten to the core.

The long halt on the banks of the Alma—at the time severely criticized—turned out to be a capital error. By not moving *en masse* on the rear of the retreating Menschikoff, immediately after the battle, the Anglo-French lost one of the grandest opportunities ever vouchsafed to soldiers. I say *en masse*, because one commander is said to have proposed employing in the pursuit, a portion of the allied forces. Now, under most circumstances, a division of strength in the field is unwise—a bad principle—but, in the case before us, it would have been unjustifiable, forasmuch as, on the 20th of September, 1854, the

number of Russian soldiers in the Crimea was unknown to us, the strategical distribution of their corps was unknown to us, the topography of the country was a myth to our staff; therefore, no general could with safety counsel the splitting, into two bodies, of the little army with which the Allies operated. Union is strength in War; delay is ruin in war, *ergo*, we did well in keeping together, but did unaccountably ill in taking so long a *siesta* after such glorious labour.\*

The uselessness of commencing with insufficient *matériel* the regular siege of an ably defended and excellently supplied arsenal, has been brought home to us. However, it is only just to observe, that one general, at least, foresaw how defective were the means with which we expected to attain immense results. From the day the rumour went abroad that, instead of any prompt mode of attack, Sevastopol was to be formally approached by saps and parallels, Sir De Lacy Evans repeatedly—from the beginning of October to the end of that month—warned the authorities of the inadequacy of the Allied artillery, pointed out to them the injudicious dissemination of that artillery along a line of above four miles, declared to them that winter would infallibly be upon us before the successful issue of our undertaking.

Moreover, by a tremendous lesson, we were taught the danger of “intermitting watch before a wakeful foe.” On this subject also General Evans spoke out. He constantly (but to no purpose) reported to the higher powers the insecurity of the Inkermann position, owing to the feebleness of the defence allotted to it, and to the peculiar

\* “According to the information most to be relied on, there were 70,000 Russian soldiers in the Crimea when the Allies invaded it, viz., 40,000 in Sevastopol, and 30,000 dispersed about the country.”—Lord Aberdeen before Sevastopol Committee.

character of the ground, which invited the attack of the enemy—at any time, with any amount of force.

One most agreeable piece of information this *annus mirabilis* did indeed impart. It established the real value of the Private Soldier. It showed how often inflexible valour and patient endurance make amends for the errors of the superior officer, and carry the day, despite obstacles seemingly insuperable. May this knowledge be turned to practical account! The late campaign will have profited the English army not a little, if it cause the diffusion of sounder professional training amongst gentlemen of the sword, and it will have strengthened the English army not a little, if it lead to the breaking down of the brazen gates, which have hitherto shut out the earnest-minded never-give-in lower and middle classes of our countrymen from the commissioned grades of the service. That

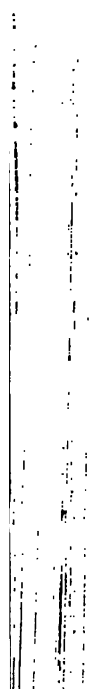
“Prodigious actions may as well be done  
By weavers’ issue as by prince’s son,”

few will dispute now-a-days. For the future, then, let both patrician and plebeian have a fair field and no favour. Let supremacy of merit be the sole means and broad highway to power. The commonwealth has need of soldiers, who can think as well as dare, contrive as well as charge, command as well as fight; so that such men be forthcoming, what matters it to old England whether they be the children of luxury, or the horny-handed sons of toil.

“Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow,  
The rest is all but leather or prunello.”

THE END.





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st R Scots  
th Kings Own  
th RF

55th Border

57th Rifles

63rd Manchester

68th DLI

th Green Howards  
th Lancs Fus  
st R Scots Fus

th RWF

77th Rifles

th Glos

79th Rifles

th E Lancs

th D of Wellington

X 88th Cumbria  
Rifles

th S Staffs

th Welch  
th Black Watch  
th Essex

93rd A + S

th DLI  
th Loyals N Lancs  
th R Berk  
th RWF

95th Rifles

X 100th Light Inf

- ✓ 1st R. Scott
- ✓ 7th R.
- ✓ 19th G.
- ✓ 20th R.
- ✓ 23rd R.
- ✓ 28th G.
- ✓ 33rd D. of Wellington's R.
- ✓ 41st Welch R.
- ✓ 44th Essex
- ✓ 47th Loyal N. Lancs
- ✓ 49th R. Brakes.
- ✓ 50th R. W. K.
- ✓ 68th D. L. I.
- ✓ 77th R. D. S.
- ✓ 79th
- ✓ X 88th
- ✓ 93rd
- ✓ 95th
- ✓ X 100th
- ✓ 21st
- ✓ 42nd
- ✓ 4th
- ✓ 30th
- ✓ 38th
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